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April, 1984
Vol. Seven, No. Four

THE FLAVOR OF NORTH COUNTRY LIVING



The Boulder—Painting by Stephen Etnier

New England's People

Helen Nute of North Conway • James B. Hamlin of North Waterford
Harpwell Painter Stephen Etnier by Martin Dibner
Silas Perkins of Kennebunkport • Dr. Cyrus Hamlin of Waterford



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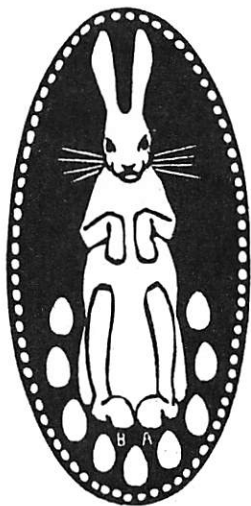


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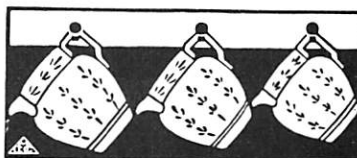
BitterSweet Views

Thanks For Your Life Poured Out . . .

Those words surfaced the other day in a hymn. They made an impression on me as I was struggling with a jumble of unformed ideas for this month's column. So I fished an odd piece of paper from my coat pocket and scrawled the lines in broken pencil.

Thanks for your life, poured out. It is a noble gratitude—to those around us who have given and are giving of themselves in our communities and lives. The image is of a pitcher, pouring, spilling out an overflowing cup of hard work and achievement—not the bitter gall of imagined good intentions, but the milk and honey of real good deeds. That is what we remember.

It is very easy for those of us in my generation to think we invented everything. We were raised on the "Right Stuff;" technology has guided us from the cradle to the computer; we've been looking for ways to "fulfill ourselves" and educate ourselves and improve



our lots ever since the babies boomed. Us, we, me.

That's all right, I think—the inclination to "get ourselves together" is a good one, but where I see objections is at the point in all this struggle to be "ME" where we have too often forgotten to lend ourselves, give ourselves (in freedom) to others around us.

Hoarding the goodness in the pitcher does no good. It only turns sour. Pouring it out allows the pitcher to refill.

This month, in all the stories I've been preparing, I've seen a common thread for the "giving-ness" of all the New Englanders we've written about here.

Take New Hampshire's Helen Nute, if you will. Every time the Conway/Fryeburg area has been mentioned to me, her name has been given as the one person to contact for answers. Associate Editor Lauren MacArthur

went to visit—many times. She found a charming, entertaining sage who has worked hard as teacher, WW II soldier, and now as unofficial historian and parliamentarian to the people of the Mt. Washington Valley. I suppose sages must irritate their fellow citizens once in a while, but, really, aren't they lucky to have her?

In Kennebunkport, just such sagacity as that was present in the form of Silas Perkins, poet. His "Common Road" and other poems had much to say about the human condition and how to live with it. He was a jewel in the crown of that town, a gift to the people who live there still.

Then there was Waterford's Dr. Cyrus Hamlin, cousin of Lincoln's Vice President Hannibal (who will be featured next month). His brains, colonial training and natural enthusiasm pulled him beyond the poverty and simplicity of his hillside farm to the larger world. As a Christian missionary to the people of Turkey, his hard work was directly responsible for the lessening of cholera, the appeasement of starvation, and the founding of a college which stands today (as American University) on the shores of the

Page 4 . . .



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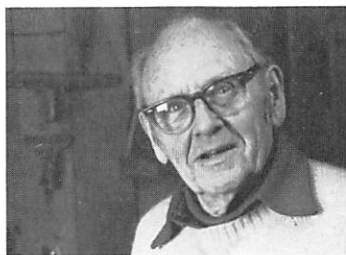
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Cover: The Boulder. Painting by Stephen Etnier of Harpswell, Maine.

... BitterSweet Views

Bosphorus in Istanbul. Cyrus Hamlin put his ideals into action. His life was poured out.

It may not be as selfless a sacrifice as Cyrus made, but the descendants of the heroic Hamlin family are still making their marks. James, a silversmith in North Bridgton, is as well known for his creativity as Bill Haynes—the photographer and himself a grandchild of the Hamlin clan.

It might be easy, at this point, to conclude that a generation of people a century ago held all the altruism of New England, and that hard work is a thing of the past.

Barbi Verenis wouldn't think so. She has worked hard to create a new business by combining the food of her Greek American tradition with her family's traditional small store. It would have been difficult to predict if you had watched a pigtailed little girl on a bicycle riding up and down Norway's Main Street twenty years ago!

Some of us were raised on tales of hard work, idealism and sacrifice. I wonder if the children of the next generation can say that? It is the greatest benefit of history, to teach us what we need to know for the future. We have only to listen, as I try to do, to the family tales (my grandmother was a Hamlin, too!)

And sometimes we're fortunate enough to see history almost in the making. Martin Dibner has chosen this issue to visit a living painter he feels is destined to even further fame. Octagenarian Stephen Etnier is still painting in his Harpswell Studio (see page 18).

Of course, life, to be *really* good, must strike a balance between the faithful and the faithless, between giving and receiving. We cannot be pouring out all the time without replenishing the supply.

We are fortunate to know the dedicated people in this issue. They are America's greatest resource. *

Nancy Marcotte

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On The Road with Sue Bonior TOWN & COUNTRY

This has been a month of contrasts from my vantage point "on the road." From city chic to rural charm, I've gleaned impressions of Maine life in many phases; rich examples of the colorful characters (and creatures) that co-exist in our corner of the earth:

- A young man walked into our corner store while I was waiting in the slow-moving, pre-dinnertime checkout line. He asked, of no one in particular, "Anybody got a leash?" and he laughed self-consciously for posing such an odd question to impatient hungry shoppers. A simple explanation followed: "There's a pig loose in the parking lot."

Without missing a figure on her register, the clerk said, "Oh, it's Lisa's" and continued to ring up purchases unfazed by what I thought to be a preposterous situation. No one in line moved or even craned his neck to see out the door, so I fought off my impulse to run out and gawk at the porker. I'm a conformist to the bone, sorry to say.

A pig on the loose anywhere outside a pen is a novelty, to my mind. And one roaming around the parking lot of a grocery store not seven miles from downtown Portland is definitely a rarity. So, when I got out of the store, I was looking for action. Perhaps the wild beast would be charging at unsuspecting drivers as they pulled into the lot. Perhaps he'd have trash strewn all about and would be resisting capture by whomever came up with a leash.

The young man was standing outside chatting with a friend. "He's out back by the garbage," he said to me, aware that I was more curious about the pig than anyone else in the store had been. I got in my car; my dog was frenzied and tried futilely to describe what she'd seen. I drove around toward the back and there was the pig... enormous, pink and hairy, utterly confounded by the tall metal trash

bin from which wafted heavenly, familiar odors. He spotted us, and figuring his chances for a helping hand good, I guess, headed for us with generous pig speed. What to do? I didn't have a leash and wouldn't have dared use it if I had. My only alternative was to slam the car in reverse and let Lisa worry about her pig!

- Downtown Portland, for all its renovated, upgraded and brand-new buildings, is nonetheless a dreary looking place on a foggy day. People outdoors don't smile when it's foggy; they all look like they're in a hurry to get indoors. The storefronts seem duller, the concrete looks grayer and the overcast sky sits heavily on the rooftops, boxing pedestrians into narrow city corridors.

Then one person comes along and changes all that.

I was walking down Congress Street one mild but foggy morning, when in front of me appeared a tanned, silver-haired gentleman "dressed to the nines." He looked absolutely stunning in a well-fitting black tuxedo, white dress shirt and black patent leather shoes. He had a bright red carnation in his pocket. Mind you, it was 9:30 in the morning, when many people have not yet had their second cup of coffee. And this vision of elegance was striding down Congress Street, smiling... yes, smiling in the fog. People all around me were doing double takes, and then, miraculously, smiling at each other to acknowledge that he was indeed real; not a figment of their winter-crazed imaginations.

I followed him for a block, reveling in the opportunity, until he stepped into his van... a florist's delivery van. It was the day before Valentine's Day and he knew how to make his deliveries just as special as they should be.

- Then there's the story about the skunk who decided to take up winter residence inside a large trailer truck tire on the playground of a day care center. Several attempts were made to roust the animal from its hideout, mainly because of fear that it could be rabid. All attempts failed. Finally, a rig was hired to physically remove both skunk and tire from the playground. The teacher commented, "The skunk just wanted to go out in proper attire."



Silas Perkins KENNEBUNKPORT'S PHILOSOPHER OF THE COAL WHARF

by Joyce Butler

"I have knocked around the world—from one end of Kennebunkport to the other."

—Silas H. Perkins

In terms of place, Kennebunkport was all Silas Perkins ever wanted to know of the world. Although he was born (on August 12, 1880) somewhere on the Pacific Ocean, it is accurate to call him a native of the small Maine town where his ancestors had been among the earliest settlers.

His birthplace was the ship *Mt. Washington* of which his father, Captain Fordyce Perkins, was master. Silas was born during a six-year voyage (the last on which Mrs. Perkins accompanied her husband) that took the *Mt. Washington* around the world more than once.

The only record of his birth was an entry in the ship's log, which in later years was lost. On the 100th anniversary of his birth, one of his daughters, looking back on her father's life, said with a twinkle in her eye, "He never could prove he was alive." It was a joke Silas Perkins would have loved.

"Sile," as he was called around town, lived all his life in Kennebunkport and neighboring Kennebunk, except for a brief time he spent in Massachusetts, studying at Worcester Academy and then working. When his father died and left him his coal business in Kennebunkport, Silas came home to run the coal office in Dock Square, and devoted his young manhood to living with and caring for his widowed mother. He married late in life, at age 40, and became the father of five children.

THE COMMON ROAD

I want to travel the common road
With the great crowd surging by,
Where there's many a laugh and many
a load,
And many a smile and sigh.
I want to be on the common way
With its endless tramping feet,
In the summer bright and winter gray,
In the noonday sun and heat.
In the cool of evening with shadows nigh,
At dawn, when the sun breaks clear,
I want the great crowd passing by,
To ken what they see and hear.
I want to be one of the common herd,
Not live in a sheltered way,
Want to be thrilled, want to be stirred
By the great crowd day by day;
To glimpse the restful valleys deep,
To toil up the rugged hill,
To see the brooks which shyly creep,
To have the torrents thrill.
I want to laugh with the common man
Wherever he chance to be,
I want to aid him when I can
Whenever there's need of me.
I want to lend a helping hand
Over the rough and steep
To a child too young to understand—
To comfort those who weep.
I want to live and work and plan
With the great crowd surging by,
To mingle with the common man,
No better or worse than I.

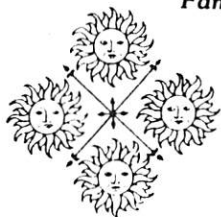
from 'Longshore Lyrics'
Silas Perkins

Sile's life paralleled that of scores of other men who have lived out their days in a small town. He made a modest living selling coal, and his pleasures were commonplace. He enjoyed chess and checkers, and in his day was one of the Kennebunk's best golfers. He was an avid reader whose keen memory allowed him to fill his conversation with interesting stories and obscure facts. This talent, plus a lively sense of humor, no doubt contributed to the popularity of his coal office where his fellow townsmen gathered regularly around the stove to swap stories and play checkers. As a member of the Knights of Pythias and the Masons he shared in the fraternal life of Kennebunkport's men. During his last years, he was the night watchman at the Kennebunk Inn, and it was there that he died on June 1, 1952, having been stricken with a heart attack at 7 a.m. while he walked across the street to the newsstand for his paper.



But Silas Perkins was not just another man who lived in a small town, for he was a poet—and a good one. He was a natural one, one of those people whose pleasure in the present and nostalgia for the past must be expressed. He might have been writing of himself in these lines from his poem "Happiness."

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*He loved the simple things of
earth—
A happy child, a bit of mirth;
The ling-ring melody of some old
song;
The sheltering tree, the evening
long
Spent by the flickering firelight
aglow
With a true friend; the quiet talk
and low;
The dreamy shadows hov'ring
round on dusky wings
Were his delight—he loved the
simple things.*

Sile's lifestyle reflected his love of simple things, but he also loved words, and his need to use them brought forth poetry that Kennebunkport's nationally known playwright and novelist, Booth Tarkington, called "people's poetry," explaining, "I think the phrase means that all sorts of people enjoy it." Kenneth Roberts, another famous Kennebunkport novelist, called Perkins' verse "stirring and musical." Sile, who said he wrote to amuse his friends and children and to relieve his own blues, called his poems "mumblepuppy stuff" and "heart poetry."

He claimed, "I didn't write a line until around 1920....," the year he was married. His family life served as the dayspring for the flow of words the natural writer releases almost in spite of himself. Most of the poems were written at the coal office and brought home to be shared with his family. His daughter Elizabeth remembers she grew up thinking everyone's father wrote a poem each day to be read at the supper table.

The coal office was not, however, an ideal working place, for a writer needs blocks of uninterrupted time in which to pursue his craft. The problem was not the press of business, but leisured friends who liked to drop by to sit and chat. Sile's solution to that problem reflected not only Yankee ingenuity but wit. A furniture salesman from Saco, who had sold Sile some chairs for the office, stopped by a few weeks later to see if they were satisfactory. He discovered that an inch or two had been cut off the front legs of the new chairs. It was, Sile assured him, a good way to keep visitors from getting too comfortable and thus to assure that they would soon move on.

Sile wrote about his own youth in Kennebunkport ("The Time She Tried To Kiss Me, and I Up and Ran Away"), the town and his neighbors ("Prayer Meetin'," "The Captains' Houses, Kennebunkport, Maine"), and about his children. The homespun philosophy of life he expressed in poems like "The Common Road," which begins

*I want to travel the common road
With the great crowd surging by
Where there's many a laugh and
many a load,*

And many a smile and sigh.

earned for him the sobriquet "Philosopher of the Coal Wharf." His poems had broad appeal because they presented small town life and echoed common sentiments.

His poems were published in local and the Portland newspaper and the *Boston Globe*. Sile himself brought them out in three books, whose publication was urged by admirers. *Down East Ballads* was the first. It was published in 1927 with illustrations by the Kennebunkport artist Louis Norton. In an article about Sile written for the *Boston Globe* in 1950, Willard deLue remembered that *Down East Ballads* created "something of a literary sensation. Reviewers were more than friendly. Some of the pieces quickly got into anthologies (and good ones)." *Longshore Lyrics* was published in 1931, and *On Shore Ballads* in 1937.

The best of Silas Perkins' poems are a cut above the work of the average amateur. They are well crafted, and those that sprang from sentiment are controlled or are spiced with humor, that most effective of all antidotes to sentimentality.

Perhaps the best known of Sile's poems was "The Common Road." The Child's Restaurant chain reprinted 40,000 copies for distribution to their breakfast customers to "help them start the day right." When President Franklin Delano Roosevelt died, "The Common Road" was read from his funeral train on a nation-wide radio hookup.

But Sile, for all the pleasure he must have taken in this attention, and as serious as he was about his "heart poetry," did not write it for fame and fortune, which is just as well, for both eluded him. DeLue, who wrote his *Globe* article two years before Sile died, said, "I'm afraid as a literary

THE CAPTAINS' HOUSES KENNEBUNKPORT, MAINE

The Captains built the houses
So long, so long ago.
They builded them for comfort
And not for empty show.
They stored them with rich treasure
From ports beyond the sea.
Their children played about their doors—
And one was home to me.

They built them where the breezes
Came fresh and cool and sweet
From off the sparkling ocean
Straight to the village street,
To whisper to them of Cathay
And sway the clinging vine,
To softly touch each childish face—
And one face there was mine.

The Captains' wives were lonely
Through each long day and night.
They watched the crested waves surge in
To crash in lanes of white.
They prayed with faith each evening
That God might still the sea,
And then they kissed their children—
And one kiss was for me.

O houses of the Captains
You sing a song to me.
You hold within your cherished walls
My long-lost Arcadie.
I live again the memories
That round about you twine.
I see the mothers grace your doors—
And one of them was mine.

Houses of the quiet street,
You seem to mutely say;
"We watch and wait through years that
pass
For those so long away;
To bid our Captains welcome home
From off the wind-blown brine."
But nevermore will they return—
And one of them was mine.

from 'Longshore Lyrics'
Silas Perkins



Above, two Captain's Houses like those in Silas Perkins' poem. Top, corner of Maine & Union Streets, Kennebunkport. Bottom, Maine Street, summer of 1939. Photos courtesy of Brick Store Museum.

figure Silas H. Perkins has been—no, not forgotten, but for the while overlooked. I have a feeling that his verse ...will become better and better known as years go on." He added, with a touch of the poet's own humor, "I certainly hope that Sile won't have to resort to dying before greater fame comes his way."

In the 30 years since Silas Perkins' death, fame has continued to elude him. His books are out-of-print and

only a fortunate few readers, who stumble on the dog-eared volumes in a relative's collection of Maine books or find them in the public libraries of the Kennebunks, know the pleasure of his art. But Sile wouldn't mind. As he himself wrote:

*I shall not leave at journey's end
What to the world seems great,
But I shall leave, for good or ill
My children—my estate.*

Silas H. Perkins chose the common road. But with his native wisdom, warm heart, and keen wit—all expressed in his poetry—he has brightened it for his readers past, present, and future. What more, as he himself said in one way and another, could man want from life?

Joyce Butler, who wrote a long-running column in the York County Coast Star, is the author of Wildfire Loose: The Week Maine Burned.

... Town and Country

• Contrast: two successful intown Portland businesses. To get to the offices of one, you walk in through a broad, modern lobby, take the elevator to the second floor and go through glass doors at the end of the corridor on which their name has been stylistically stencilled. To get to the offices of the other, you walk through the narrow cluttered shop, open a home-made sliding door at the back, go up three rickety flights of twisting stairs and then through another door that especially large people would have to

go through sideways. It's all a matter of image. Guess which one is an advertising agency and which one is a metalworking concern.

• How's business? A clothing store which specializes in rather pricey women's finery was abuzz with activity on two different occasions I was there. A gift shop catering to the same budgets had not a soul around those same two days. One place that may or may not lack for customers is the local thrift shop. Thrift shops may

conjure up a variety of thoughts in your mind, but whatever you think they're all about, you'd better look again. There's lots of really nice things to be found! It's amazing not more people go to them. The best thrift shops are those located in or close to towns with a fairly substantial well-to-do population. Honest!

• Bumper sticker seen on a Saab: *Don't put nuclear arms around those you love.* Bumper sticker on a Cadillac: *I'd rather be dead than Red.*

Announcing . . .

BitterSweet's Third Annual Young People's WRITING CONTEST

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THE WOULD BE LOGICIAN TURNED POETESS

I climbed the royal steps to reason
Tightly reigning sentiment
And I beheld austerity
And logical contentment.
I longed to share the noble throne
To breathe the air so cool and light
As eagerly I hurried on
To scale the awesome flight.
I tired quickly in my haste
And tripped and stumbled clumsily,
And when I'd tumbled to the base,
All I had was poetry.
A single tear escaped my lid
And stained the oaken wood,
Worn by feet more self assured
And certain where they stood.
I turned my head and raised my eyes
Assessing my great fall
Then bounded to the top at last
To leave three poems on the wall.

Nancy Merrow
Portland

THE MARRIAGE

Dare I merge two disciplines thought
disparate by some,
By those who think the neighborhoods
disjoint?
I do.
For I can see an intersection rich, the two
as one,
While timely Muses, holding hands,
anoint
The two.
Mathematics rhymes, and poetry is but
a sum
Of passion and perfection to a point
Anew.

Nancy Merrow
Portland



Helen, at age 2

Profile: Helen Nute

North Conway, New Hampshire

And The Beat Goes On...

First and last she is a teacher.

She has also been an historian, a parliamentarian, and an Army Corporal (having reached that exalted rank during World War II). She was a delegate to the New Hampshire Constitutional Convention in 1974, a delegate to the National Democratic Convention in 1972—receiving more votes in New Hampshire than George McGovern. She's been listed in *Who's Who in American Politics* for the past ten years, in *World Who's Who of Women* (Cambridge, England) for the past eight years, and in the *Register of International Profiles* for the past four years.

Helen Elizabeth Nute was born October 25, 1879, during Queen Victoria's 'Diamond Jubilee Year.' Her life would become the antithesis of the rigid Victorian ideal.

At the age of ten, Helen Nute was picking blueberries to save money for her college education. And her toil did not go unnoticed. Helen Bigelow (of the carpet magnates) Merriman carefully followed the progress of the small child who lived on Artists Falls Road in North Conway, New Hampshire.

The fifth of seven children born to Dexter and Mary Virginia (Eisle) Nute entered the world in an upstairs bedroom of the home she now lives in.

Helen Nute can look out of her living room window from her favorite winged-back chair and watch the rushing water of Pudden Brook fall over the decayed dam site that provided the power for an assortment of mills during her grandfather Leander's time.



The girl graduate

In 1864, her grandfather—a wounded Civil War veteran—purchased the industrial center of the village. Her present home was an industrial block then housing a carding mill, a starch mill, and a blacksmith shop. He added a saw mill and a cider mill.

Dexter Nute, Helen's father, was brought to live in a converted section of the mill when he was about five years old, and there he watched his father build things. Leander added a third floor to the living ell by diverting water from the dam and sluicing out from *under* the original two stories. So, the third floor built became the first floor of their home!

Growing up under the tutelage of his father—the builder of almost anything, including covered bridges—Dexter, too, became inventive. He

by Lauren MacArthur



At town meeting

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designed a piece of equipment to carry granite down from the mountain at the Redstone Quarry in No. Conway that was later used in quarries all over the nation.

It was while he was designing equipment for a water tower in Haddonfield, New Jersey, that he met his wife, Mary Virginia Eisle. "He brought mother here," says Helen, "and she always talked of visiting her home. But it was over thirty years before she ever saw Haddonfield again."

And although Helen's parents were never financially well off, their children's lives were influenced by their strong family pride and inquisitiveness. And no effort was too much to assure their children's education.

Helen didn't begin school until she was almost seven years old due to the timing of her birth. The cutoff date was September 1 and, of course, Helen was born in October. But she certainly made up for it. She attended Conway grammar school and Fryeburg (Maine) Academy (there wasn't a high school in Conway), skipping grades along the way. Between the ages of seven and fifteen, Helen completed thirteen years of school.

She wanted to go on to college. But she was too young, and there wasn't any money.

Still, her parents were able to arrange for her to attend Westfield Normal School in Westfield, Mass. The principal of that school recognized her potential and encouraged her in her desire to attend Radcliffe.

Helen entered Radcliffe in 1915. She had taken some fifteen entrance exams to qualify. And Helen Bigelow Merriman—watching from the sidelines all those years—loaned Helen the money to attend.

Her first two years were disappointing, however. "Harvard professors came over to teach us," she explains, "and they were boring. They had what they called 'section men' (graduate students) correcting our papers and they were our only connection with the professors."

It wasn't until her junior year that she came in contact with two professors who impressed her. One, Edmund Ezra Day, took an interest in and encouraged the ambitious Miss Nute. He later became the president of Cornell University. The other—whose name she can no longer remember—stimulated her interest in economics.

She was one-half point from graduating with a degree in English at the end of her junior year. But her appetite had been whetted. In her senior year she switched majors—from English to economics—and took five courses that year, graduating with an economics degree.

It was 1919—the last year of World War I. And all the men were coming home to no jobs, no anything. So, Helen, with her sparkling new degree decided—on the very day of her graduation—to head for New York City to be a labor relations leader.

Before Helen took the night boat from Providence, R.I., to New York City that graduation day, she was to receive the most important gift of her life. Mrs. Merriman approached Helen and her mother after the graduation exercises to inform them that her gift to Helen was the money she had loaned for her college education.

After two weeks in the city, a job at the Guaranty Trust Company—not quite labor relations—is what came up. And after dealing with bed bugs ("They eat around your neck and every exposed area," she laughs, "and when you turn the lights on you can't see a sign of them!"); a female boss who had it in for college graduates; and a boring job, "checking here, there and yonder" through files, files, and more files, Helen began to reconsider her occupational choice.

The principal at the normal school she attended in Westfield, Mass., invited her to come and teach social studies at that school. "I decided," she says, "that teaching school and using a little common sense—well, that was the life for me."

She taught at Westfield, and in school systems in New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Vermont, New York, and Colorado—always aiming toward teaching at the school with the best rating in the country.

After ten years she attained that goal. From 1929 until 1954—with time off for the Army and a sabbatical in Scotland—Helen taught English at Newton High School in Newton, Mass.

Her teaching career was full at Newton. She was a senior play coach, worked on the school newspaper, headed the girl's verse speaking choir, and started the Tusitala Club. Tusitala is a Samoan word from Robert Louis Stevenson's 'Road of Loving Hearts' and means, "Teller of Tales."



Above, Helen Nute, W.A.C.

Below, Helen today

While at Newton she and her classes published two books of poetry and produced a program for the annual meeting of the national PTA in Boston. It was called 'I Hear America Singing' and depicted the growth of American Democracy. "I never worked so hard in my life," she laughs, remembering all the coordinating she had to do to bring it off. But it was wonderful. It was performed twice in Newton and then at the Statler Hotel in Boston.

In 1954, Helen Nute retired and returned to her Artists Falls Home where she still resides. But she never has stopped teaching.

She is right there keeping the school committee on its toes, answering a parliamentary question at the town meeting, and available with an answer to almost any historic question concerning the White Mountain area.

She was chairman of the American Revolution Bicentennial Committee in Conway and wrote a dramatic presentation of a town meeting for that occasion.

She discovered no one has published

an accounting of an authentic dramatic revolutionary town meeting. She researched and came up with what she feels was the way town meetings of that time were conducted. And she even sought out descendants of the participants of Conway's 1776 town meeting to portray the dramatic presentation.

She is most proud of the fact she "never gave a direct command" in all her years of teaching. And her proudest moment in teaching is a shining example of her ability to instill the desire for learning. No one showed up to be her substitute while she was absent taking her exams for the Army. She had three classes that day. And every one of them appointed a chairman, consulted her plan book, followed it, took attendance, saw that it was reported to the office, collected homework, and assigned homework. They conducted themselves admirably. Her classes never missed a beat.

And the beat goes on....



MacArthur, BitterSweet's associate editor, lives in Oxford, Maine.

She is right there keeping the school committee on its toes, answering a parliamentary question, and available with an answer to almost any historic question concerning the White Mountain area.



They came from England to Harvard, Massachusetts. They were heroes of the Revolution and five brothers settled on land given to them in Western Maine. Among their sons was a Vice President of the United States in another war, and the missionary who founded Roberts College in Turkey.

Descent

The Hamlins are of Huguenot descent. Their ancestors, driven by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685) out of France where they had suffered persecution and, in one case, martyrdom, fled to England and Germany. Many of them returned to France when amnesty was offered and their descendants are still Protestants, among them being the admiral of the French Navy in the Crimean War of 1854-56. In the latter part of the 17th century the two traditional brothers immigrated to this country from England, one of them settling in Harvard, Massachusetts.

Eleazer Hamlin

Eleazor Hamlin was a farmer, a great reader of history, and a true patriot. He had seventeen children, and with three of his sons fought in the war of the Revolution to the end. His admiration of Roman heroes led him to name his first-born son Africanus (leaving off the Scipio); his second he named Americus, the third and fourth Asiaticus and Europus. But the world called them Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, and there

was no remedy. After the four continents, Eleazer had *twins* (born 1768) whom he named Hannibal and Cyrus. He also had Eleazer, Jr., Isaac, Jacob (who died early), and several others. Hannibal was the father of Cyrus (of Roberts College). The first Cyrus, Hannibal's twin, was the father of Vice-President Hannibal Hamlin. (He and the younger Cyrus were, therefore, cousins), Cyrus being named for Hannibal's father and vice-versa.

Africa was always called Major Hamlin, having risen to that rank in the war under Washington whom he held in profound respect and admiration, keeping a Boswellian diary of everything he saw, heard, or knew of him.

At the close of the war all Eleazer Hamlin possessed was a large family and a free country. In consideration of his great sacrifices and faithful services, a large section of land in the "District of Maine" was given to him by the Massachusetts legislature. With unspeakable hope and joy, he went down to view it and select farms for himself and his sons. He would then have enough left for their sons.

He found the tract so rocky that

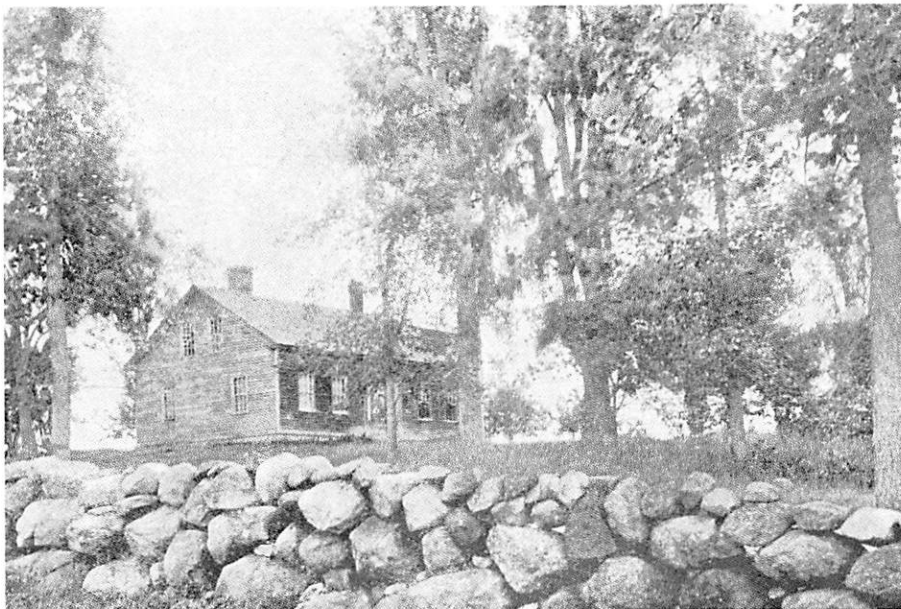
nothing but a sparse growth of spruce trees could sustain life upon it and so full of caves that it had become the headquarters and breeding place of bears; which it still is. He begged the legislature not to impose the gift upon him as it was already occupied by the only inhabitants it could support.

Finally four farms were given to his sons in Waterford; and Africa, Eleazer, Jr., America and Hannibal came and selected their places of abode. Hannibal had earned money as a school teacher and was able to clear a part of the land and to build a house and barn. Later, in the winter of 1799-1800, he went to Acton, Massachusetts and was married.

There were then about thirty-five families living in the town, and a majority of the men were Revolutionary soldiers. Hannibal's wife was Susan Faulkner, born in 1772 in Acton, Mass. She was a beautiful and charming woman, the daughter of Colonel Francis Faulkner, who was a Revolutionary soldier and a man of character and influence. There was *iron* in the blood of the Faulkners as well as of the Hamlins. Col. Faulkner had eleven children. Those were the days of large families.

Hannibal and his wife took great pains to keep up Massachusetts culture down in the new settlement in Maine. When other families were located in the neighborhood, he established a weekly spelling match for old and young. After spelling a while, everyone communicated whatever news or new thoughts he had; public affairs were discussed, etc. It was in effect a rural lyceum and it knit the families together and did much to cultivate the intelligence which characterized those early inhabitants of the town.

Hannibal had six children, two of whom died in infancy. The remaining four were Susan (1801), a girl of judgement, prudence, and executive ability beyond her years; Rebecca (1805), a bookworm, scholar and poet



Cyrus Hamlin's birthplace, Waterford

THE HAMLIN FAMILY

who was always the lady, always the executive of the household; Hannibal (1809); and Cyrus (1811), the latter being a sickly child at the start and a great care and anxiety to his mother. The neighbors said his "head was too big" and she must never hope to raise him.

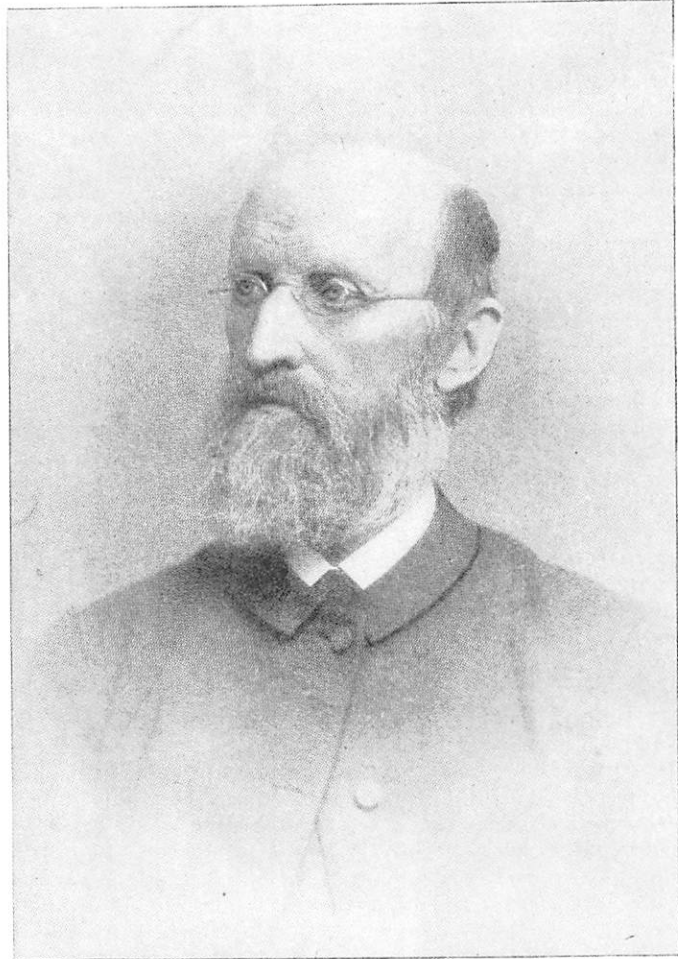
Hannibal, senior died of quick consumption when the youngest child was only seven months old, leaving his wife with two farms, four children, and a large unsettled business of which the lawyers speedily relieved her to their own profit rather than hers. She had known little about the farm and now it was to be her main support. But, being of good Puritan stock and well educated for the times, her faculty and capacity came with the demand and she conducted her affairs with great prudence and wisdom.

Colonial Maine Life

It was a family in which the Bible was revered and daily read as the Word of God, and the Sabbath was strictly kept from all unnecessary labor. The meeting-house was nearly two miles distant, but it was very bad weather that could keep the family all at home. The church was unwarmed and, in very cold weather, their heroic sufferings were mitigated by a footstove.

Their childhood amusements were few and simple—pitching quoits, firing stones and snowballs at a mark, coasting on sleds, playing "blind man's buff," berrying—berries were never sold, but sometimes exchanged for something else.

The Hannibal Hamlin farm was situated on the road leading from Bridgton through Waterford and Norway to Paris, the shire town of Oxford County. It had a very pleasant western aspect of cultivated farms rising to the hilltops, and beyond were the White Hills and Mt. Washington. Hannibal was the high sheriff of Oxford County. He died at the age of forty-two. His boys early became inured to toil. The mother tried to guard them against overwork



Cyrus Hamlin

but the older boy's constitution was unquestionably injured by it. The father left a large supply of farm implements, but after his death the neighbors were always ready to borrow them and they disappeared one by one. Finally the boys went to work and made things for themselves, Hannibal, Jr. having a natural gift for whittling out things.

The Hamlins were a reading family. Their uncle, Dr. Cyrus Hamlin of Paris Hill (the vice-president's father) had a large library. On winter evenings, one member of the family read aloud while some family industries, such as sewing and knitting, were going on. To Cyrus and his brother,

Page 20 . . .

He's a descendant of the famous family and an artist in North Bridgton, Maine. He's apt to answer the query, "How are you, Jim?" with the retort, "Keen as a barn rat, thanks."

Passing through the picturesque village of North Bridgton, Maine, one notices an oval sign hanging in front of a tidy, typical Cape Cod home. Painted in the center of the sign is a simple, stately pine tree, which is the trademark of the silversmith who lives here.

A visit to the shop underneath this unobtrusive house is as extraordinary an experience as meeting the man who answers your query, "How are you, Jim?" with the retort, "Keen as a barn rat, thanks."

James Betts Hamlin bids you enter his shop and his world, with a youthful twinkle in his blue eyes that belies his eighty-odd years. His display room contains a few of his jewelry designs and a collection of his finest work. "Don Quixote" perches jauntily on a shelf, his personality clearly defined in fused scraps of metal. "Reclining Nude on Edge of Forest" captures the nuances of light filtering softly through trees onto the graceful female form in the foreground. Copper, pewter and brass combine in this large piece, with the strategic placement of a glowing set stone as a focal point. Silver inlay traces a whimsical pattern through a heavy, rich green patina on a copper plate. Gleaming geometric precision creates a *trompe-l'oeil* effect on the surface of a pewter rectangle, as incised triangles meet at the apex with either cut lines or polished swirls.

Stepping down into the actual workshop, one is bombarded by the clutter of Jim's "treasures." Rocks, twisted bits of grapevine, shells and odd shapes of metal hang from the ceiling or sit comfortably on every shelf and windowsill. Their presence is his inspiration.

There is order in the placement of every tool, however, and Jim knows exactly where to find what he needs. Large equipment, such as a drill press, metal lathe, kiln, and the dragon-like

propane torch, share the shop with the tiniest files (all sorted to a particular use), engraving and stamping tools, and jars of colorful enamel in rainbow hues. Forty raising hammers; numerous planishing and chasing hammers hang anxiously, ready to shape, polish or decorate. A few large stumps, studded with stakes of various shapes, take on the appearance of kindly, but odd beings.

The first recollection Jim has of his budding artistic talent, was as a boy at the kitchen table. "Mother had an oil cloth table cover, with swirling designs on it. I saw animals and creatures in the shapes, and drew around them with a pencil." The road to his involvement in silversmithing was not paved with gold, however, but the story itself is a many-faceted gem!

Although he was born in a log cabin in West Virginia (where he was delivered by a nephew of the infamous Hatfields), Jim has deep roots in North Bridgton. His father, Frederick Sherman Hamlin, was born there in 1864, and graduated from Bridgton Academy. After Frederick's marriage to Florence Betts, his lumber business took them to West Virginia, and later, to Columbus Ohio, where Jim remembers riding to kindergarten in a pony cart. When Frederick had an opportunity to open branches of his business in Europe, the family—which consisted of two boys and a girl—soon settled in Liverpool, England, where the children were tutored.

Frederick returned to North Bridgton in 1905, when he bought a farm and dedicated the rest of his life to laboring on it. When the children were not attending a two room schoolhouse, they contributed to the seasonal cycle of hard work. The Hamlin boys cut 20 cords of wood for each winter's use, with the aid of a cross-cut saw and a team of three horses hitched to a sleigh. Four-foot lengths were split by drilling a hole, inserting a fuse, gun-

powder, paper, brickdust, then lighting the wad and running for one's life.

Summer brought the hay, and one hundred tons were cut. Sweet corn was harvested and taken by wagon to the Burnham & Morrill factory in Harrison. When the apples ripened, five barrels of cider were pressed for storage through the winter. Good, cold, hard cider from the last barrels washed exhaustion down parched throats during the next summer's hay season.

Jim and his older brother, Bill, found little time for extracurricular activities. While one of them played ball, the other had to stay on the farm to help with the milking. Frederick pressured them to stay on the farm to work, at the price of quitting Bridgton Academy. Both boys were finally forced to leave home to continue their educations.

Hard work continued for Jim when he took off a half year to work in a hardware store for Joe Libby, of Sanford. Jim remembers selling high-button shoes for 25¢ a pair, to clear out old stock. Orders taken in the morning were filled by a bumpy buggy ride in the afternoon.

By boarding in a private home and doing chores for his keep, Jim was able to return to his education. At the time of his graduation from Bridgton Academy in 1918, he was a member of the Naval Reserve. Active duty found him on a converted pleasure craft, patrolling the coast for submarines.

On a grim morning in 1919, the craft docked in Boston harbor near a large holding tank of molasses that was being filled to its three million gallon capacity. Suddenly, the tank burst from the sheer weight of its contents, and the massive surge of viscous fluid spewed over homes, people and horses, crushing buildings under its weight, and suffocating its victims. Jim and the rest of the crew tried in vain to clear the molasses from

James B. Hamlin, Silversmith

by Cynthia Baker

smothering people. Many years passed before Jim could stomach the taste or smell of molasses.

Glorious bells, pealing through the stillness of night watch at Rockland, signalled the end of the war and Jim's return to Bates College to finish his education. Upon his graduation in 1923, he signed himself up as a deckhand on a Munson line freighter, which set sail from Brooklyn to take on lumber in Mobile, and adventure in the Strait of Magellan.

Three and a half million feet of lumber would be unloaded in Buenos Aires, in exchange for nitrates to be taken back to Jacksonville, Florida.

Tierra del Fuego inspired as much awe in Jim as it must have in Charles Darwin. Scantly-clad natives approached in their dugout canoes, their only heat emanating from small fires perched atop stones. Asking for "zapatos," they held up baskets for exchange.

Sheer mountain walls, 900 feet high, made it necessary to navigate from the flying bridge. With water depth a mighty 650 feet, they glided eerily close to sheer rock walls which rippled with intricate waterfalls.

Jim saw his first albatross, which impressed him as the "dumbest, sleepy looking bird, but very smart."

Adventure on the high seas was marred only by the death of the steward, who drank himself into oblivion on ether alcohol. Six months later, the rest of the crew returned safely to New York City, where Jim began the long road to silversmithing.

While working for the New York Telephone Company's engineering department, Jim began night classes at the Crafts Students' League. Dabbling first in pottery and wood carving, Jim felt at home when he took up metalsmithing. Dan Eichner, the silversmithing instructor, invited Jim to work with him at his private studio in Bloomfield, New Jersey.



Bill Haynes Photo

Page 29 . . .

A Country Easter

New Englander Jack Barnes recalls Easter in Greece and other places

Perhaps it is because our winter has been so mild, with green grass at the moment forming a striking contrast to the patches of snow that survived our most recent springlike rain; or perhaps it's that I am expecting my ewes to lamb early this year that causes me to reflect upon Easter. Somehow when I see the naked branches of the trees transformed to silver by the rays of a brilliant sun—the kind one hopes to see on Easter morning—I expect to see crocuses, jonquils, and daffodils parading along our rail fence like ladies displaying new Easter bonnets. The warm flow of air that smells of spring belies the fact that this is still winter; and, of course, is just a brief intermezzo before another Arctic blast sends the thermometer plummeting once again.

I have witnessed the arrival and the passing of more than a half century of Easters. When I think of Easter mornings when I was a small boy growing up in our little house in Long Beach on the shore of Lake Sebago, I think of platters heaped with ham and eggs and a small stuffed chicken beside my plate—a poor substitute for what I really wanted most: a flock of real baby chicks. I recall a howling blizzard that disrupted Easter almost completely in North Dakota, cherry blossoms in Japan, and an unexpected snowfall in Saint Gallen, Switzerland. The melting snow that Easter morning flowed down the windows of my hotel room like tears from the eyes of one who wept for the pathetic plight of the jonquils and tulips drooping under their burden of new wet snow. For the most part, the Easters over the years flow together like watercolors in a landscape painting. One Easter, however, is engraved permanently and graphically in my memory, so that no Easter ever comes and goes without my reliving that memorable Easter I spent in Greece in 1953.

During the summer of 1952 I was visiting friends in a small Serbian village in Yugoslavia. Soon after my arrival I sent travelers' checks to a travel agency in Trieste to reserve passage on a ship for New York. Somehow my checks disappeared in the morass of Communist bureaucracy, and I was left with almost no money and no way of returning to my teaching job in Nebraska. My visa was about to expire, and I had to make a fast exit from Yugoslavia. Where would I go? With my last bit of money I purchased a train ticket for Thessaloniki in northern Greece where I hoped I might find some kind of job teaching at Anatolia College.

Desperate perseverance paid off. Not only did I land a part-time position at the college which gave me a roof over my head and three meals a day, but I was able to find additional work at two language institutes and the university. The gods from Mt. Olympus were smiling down upon me.

Time passed quickly. Each day I encountered something new and challenging as I absorbed more and more of the Greek culture and became more proficient in the language.

As Easter approached, the days were warm and crystal clear. From my room I could look down the hill and see the green fields of spring wheat, the vibrant port of Thessaloniki, the turquoise gulf under an azure sky, and some days—really clear days—Mount Olympus during those rare moments when it casts off its veil and reveals its legendary summit, still covered with snow.

I was looking forward to the Easter vacation. Although I had no definite plans, I was thinking tentatively of catching the Orient Express for Istanbul and visiting the sister college to Anatolia—the famous Roberts College. (See page 31.)

One afternoon just before the students were to leave the campus to spend the holiday with their families, there was a gentle knocking at my door. When I opened it, Kostas Kranias, a small, rather shy boy from my first level English class, stood, hat in hand. "Mr. Jack," he said, "my family and I would like to invite you to our home to spend Easter."

It took very little effort to conceal my excitement, for I knew that Kostas lived in a rather remote area near the mountains which form a natural boundary with Albania.

It was a long, devious route to Kastoria, located on the shores of a mountain lake by the same name. From time to time we could see soldiers with rifles slung over their shoulders riding horses and mules along rugged mountain trails, for Greece was still struggling to recover from the devastating effects of World War II and especially from the struggle with the Communist guerrillas that at one time controlled most of Greece.

During the days preceding Easter, there seemed to be a perpetual aura of excitement that resembled closely the approaching days of Christmas in our country. The local market was a fever of activity; and, of course, every family that could possibly afford it purchased a whole lamb. The local fish market where fresh fish from the lake was sold each morning did a thriving business, for everyone abstained from eating meat during the entire week preceding Easter—that is, except me, for Kranias' mother insisted that I eat meat each day, knowing that I was not of the Greek Orthodox faith.

Kastoria is noted for its fur industry and its multitude of ancient Romanesque churches. Kostas and his older brother spent many hours almost every day guiding me through the narrow cobblestone streets, so nar-



Spring lambs at Brookfield Farm—Jack Barnes Photo

row in places that the occupants of the Turkish-style houses can often stand on their second-floor balcony (which extends out over nearly half the street) and shake hands with their neighbors across the street.

We visited church after church, some so tiny that they hold only a few dozen people. Despite several centuries of Turkish occupation during which much damage was done to the interior of many of the churches, some of the most exquisite Byzantine frescoes and mosaics are to be found in the churches of Kastoria. During the week of Easter, most of the hundred or more churches in Kastoria are visited almost daily by the local population and visitors.

On the eve of Easter, families arise early, especially the women. Each household bustles with activity. Most important of all is the preparation of the lamb. All day, whole lambs are turned on spits intermittently over a slow burning fire. The roasting must be done slowly and evenly.

Late in the evening we all attended what is called midnight mass at the local church, which was illuminated by candles and smelled of aromatic incense. On the way home we were accompanied by family friends. Each person carried at least one hard-boiled egg, and frequently one would test the durability of his or her egg by tapping it against that of friend or acquaintance. The egg that survived the blow without its shell being shattered portended a year of good fortune for the owner. My egg survived considerable battering, and for me the ensuing year was a splendid one.

As the hands of the clock neared twelve midnight, one could sense the growing anticipation and excitement. The long-awaited moment was upon us. "*Xristos anesteis!*" ("Christ has arisen!") everyone in the large sitting room cried, and everyone embraced or shook hands. It was the signal to begin the *Anastasis* or the Resurrection Feast. The long fast was over.

As we sat down to a long table,

large bowls of savory lamb stew was served as an appetizer. Then came the main course of rice and lamb, *koulourakia* or Easter bread, and plenty of *retsina*—a popular Greek wine that is seasoned with resin.

It was nearly three o'clock in the morning by the time the guests departed; and everyone, weary but happy, retired for some much-needed sleep.

The sun—a big golden disk—had climbed high over the mountains and reflected warmth and radiance upon the blue waters and the ancient town. There were a few fishing boats—even on Easter morning—but not many. I remember that I thought about Lake Sebago and whether or not the ice was out of the Big Bay.

Easter morning in Kastoria was a morning of giving—of sharing one's food and even money with the poor. There was a gypsy family that lived only a short distance from Kostas' house. I watched them hold a brief

MARTIN

MAINES IN

STEPHEN

(1903



"Portland Waterfront"—oil on masonite, 1979

"Spring Thaw"—oil on masonite, 1982



Seashore and the objects, human and elements in an Etnier painting. Boats, houses from Maine to the Bahamas—all f Their common denominator is peaceful s

No Maine painter, with the possible ex has achieved so tranquil an image in his madman from morning until night," Et dedication to work was contagious." Fro

Working in the cool palette range that images that persist in the viewer's mind sense of loneliness persists, too. Etnier, g allows little to come between him and his ately sets out to produce "art." He paints his reactions to places and things.

"The only reason I paint," he says, "is wonderful and I want other people to kn what you love."

Etnier's studio/home, designed by him itself. Overlooking Middle Bay on an iso (besides excellent taste) a lifetime of int roundings. Pennsylvania-born and Mai today is the dean of our permanent re museums, galleries and collectors world unfortunate circumstance demanding in honoring him in his lifetime is long over

Martin Dibner, novelist, painter, and arts, is currently completing a children's Avery paintings.

DIBNER

DREAMS ART

ETNIER

)
erwise, that occupy it, are the primary
sherfolk, cyclists, sand beaches, light-
d their way into his serene compositions.
nce in the presence of dignity.
tion of Etnier's teacher, Rockwell Kent,
t. Oddly enough, Kent "...worked like a
er recalls. "His honesty, simplicity and
this—serenity!
his hallmark, Etnier evokes memorable
ng after the painting has been seen. A
tleman, *bon vivant*, and himself a loner,
e mistress—his art. Not that he deliber-
mply to convey how excited he is about

cause I love what I see. I find something
w that it's wonderful. You should paint

and later expanded, is an inspiration in
ted cove in South Harpswell, it reflects
acy with the sea and its elemental sur-
-adopted, octogenarian Stephen Etnier
ent artists. His work, sought after by
de, has been sorely neglected here—an
mediate attention. A major retrospective
e.

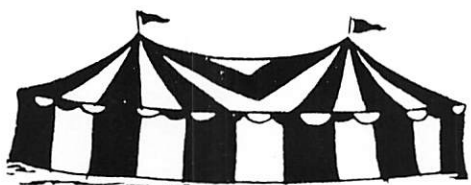
annel 8 television commentator on the
ok he has written to accompany Milton



"Poling Off"—oil on masonite, 1982

"Bay Point in Winter"—oil on masonite, 1979





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... Greek Country Easter

meeting to consider strategy and logistics; then they rapidly dispersed, each going in a different direction. It was a large family. Inevitably a young girl approached the house and rang the bell. Promptly Kostas' mother and sister opened the door, and soon the little gypsy girl had an armful of bread, meat, and fruit, besides some coins that were thrust into her pocket. One by one the members of the clan re-emerged from the narrow streets and once again congregated in their small yard to display their cache. Surely they were destined to eat well for many days to come.

Is it possible that thirty Easters have come and gone since then? I have traveled down so many roads; but eighteen years later, after spending some time in the Middle East to complete my graduate thesis, I made an impromptu decision to retrace the road to my adopted city of Thessaloniki. Somehow I thought that I could relive some of the many happy moments I had spent there so many years ago. I soon came to realize that life does not stand still...that once one leaves the past behind him, it can be relived only in one's memories. So altered was my city of Thessaloniki that entire areas of old Turkish houses with the narrow streets had vanished. Vanished too were most of my old friends and acquaintances. The disappointment was shattering. "One should never attempt to relive the past," I kept repeating to myself.

But I could not give up my quest completely. "Change comes more slowly in the villages and remote towns," I told myself. "I am going to Kastoria!"

I did and I was not disappointed. Kostas was home visiting from Athens. The little boy, however, had vanished; in his place was a big man and a successful lawyer. But to him I was still "Mr. Jack." I always would be. His mother and father were still well. The years had altered their appearance but little. I was welcomed as a member of the family who had been away from home a long, long time. Fortunately there are some things that time and distance can never extinguish.



*Jack Barnes
Brookfield Farm
Hiram*

Barbi Verenis celebrates her Greek-American traditions at the family store in Norway, Maine.

Verenis'

Verenis'. If that sounds like Greek to you, you're absolutely right!

And where would you expect to find a Greek family offering a variety of quality food services?

In Norway, of course...Norway, Maine, that is.

Barbi Verenis—and her sidekick, Max—manage the store her grandparents, Constantine “Charlie” and Helen, started over seventy years ago after immigrating to the United States.

Max works when Barbi works. He can be seen most frequently overseeing the place from his seat of authority.

The ten-year-old yellow labrador retriever usually has one eye half open and one paw hanging over the edge of the purple bean bag chair provided for him, right square in the middle of the store. This is serious business to him.

Greek people frequently are known for their savvy in the fruit business. And Constantine and Helen were no exception.

“A lot of Greeks ended up in the Portland area,” Barbi explains. “But I really have no idea why they came up this far (to Norway). We are still the only Greek family in the whole area.”

Barbi's grandparents began their business in 1914 by peddling fruit all over town from the back of a truck.

The store their granddaughter now runs really isn't too much different—physically—than it was back then. And Barbi proudly escorts anyone interested to the back of the store and the spot where her grandparents, her father and his brother stood for so many years at the cash register.

There is actually a dip in that wood floor marking the place.

Barbi's dad George—who still works full time at the business—took over its operation in the 1940's. Over the years he added pizza and beer to the fruit and convenience items.

But it is Barbi who has finally brought the Greek flavor to the store and the area.

She opened a delicatessen and a bakery inside the store. And, of course, they both feature scrumptious Greek delicacies she makes herself. As a matter of fact, Barbi has turned the store into a mini “league of nations” with her creative touch.

A sidewalk cafe graces the front of the store in warm weather, adding—along with her marvelous quiche—a little French *savoir faire*. And she serves lasagna (homemade), pizza, and submarine sandwiches—for an Italian contribution.

Of course, the convenience store—with all its typically convenient items and junk foods—epitomizes the American connection.

For mouth-watering Greek treats, Barbi prepares *Finikia*, a brandied-orange-flavored cookie rolled in walnuts and honey; *Kourambiethes*, mostly butter and the most famous Greek celebration; *Spanakopita*, a Greek spinach pie made with filo (paper-thin dough) and feta cheese; and of course, *Baklava*, the most famous of all Greek creations, with its 20-40 layers of filo and crushed walnuts drenched in honey and rose water.

One wonders how Maine's typically meat-and-potatoes-type citizens might respond to all these funny-named foods.

“If I say it's good,” laughs Barbi, “they are willing to give it a try.”

by Lauren MacArthur


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Barbi Verenis at work

She tells us that the Easter celebration is the most dramatic of the festivals of her native Greek Orthodox church. The parishioners have been fasting for a time. On Easter Eve at midnight all the lights in the church are off and the priest lights everyone's candle. A red egg, signifying the blood of Christ, is given to each person.

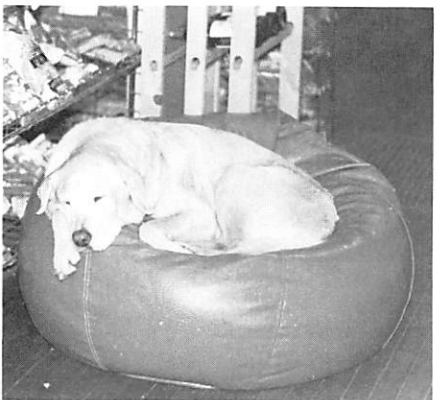
The celebratants return to their homes to end their fast, beginning with a Greek soup made of lamb hearts and lungs. "And they party for the next week!" laughs Barbi.

The red egg is the centerpiece for the traditional *Lambropsomo* or, as we know it, Greek Easter Bread. This sweet bread is made in braids and wrapped about the egg. (See Recipe.)

Barbi makes sure she has several of these breads on hand at her store for the Easter season.

When the bread is all eaten and the egg remains, a sort of chicken wish-bone activity takes place. Each person holds his egg on end in his hand. Then they hit them together. If yours doesn't break it means good luck for you for the next year.

Max at work



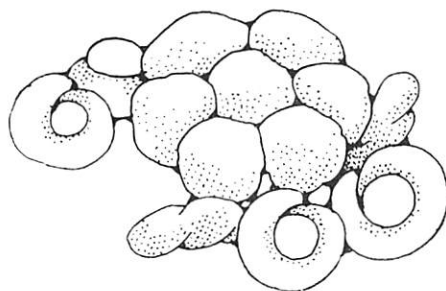
Traditions. Every ethnic group has them. And Barbi Verenis carries on the traditions of her ancestry successfully in an area where her family is the only Greek one.

Her little store is a veritable cornucopia, with its staples, Greek delicacies, French offerings, Italian items—a labyrinth of fun and interesting, delicious foods to explore.

She and Max are there for a while. And should you stop in, Max may even open that eye all the way!

Lambropsomo Greek Easter Bread

- 2 T. yeast
- 1/4 C. warm water
- 1/2 tsp. ea. of cinnamon, anise seed, and orange peel
- 1 bay leaf
- 1/2 C. water
- 1 oz. ouzo (optional)
Ouzo is a Greek liqueur—
licorice-flavored like
anisetto—only more potent.
- 7 C. flour (unsifted)
- 1 C. sugar
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/2 C. hot milk
- 6 T. butter
- 3 eggs



Topping: Egg yolk and sesame seeds

Dissolve yeast. Put flavorings into the half-cup of water and bring to a boil. Set aside to steep and cool. Put flour, sugar, salt in large bowl. Heat milk, add butter, cool. Make well in flour and mix eggs, yeast, milk, and flavored water. (Remove bay leaf) Knead for 20 minutes. Let rise in oiled bowl, covered. When double, punch down and knead for 5 minutes. Shape into braids into greased pans. Place hard boiled red egg in center. Glaze with egg yolk, sprinkle with sesame seeds. Bake at 350° for 1 hour.

Lauren MacArthur lives in Oxford.
She works for the Lewiston Daily Sun

THINKING OF COUNTRY THINGS by John Meader

Tips About Tomatoes

John Meader is a Buckfield farmer who has a unique horticultural expertise. He has another quality which lends itself to a semi-regular column in BitterSweet—he is a writer who teaches a course at Bates College.

Reportedly, the tomato tops the list as the favorite vegetable of American gardeners. I don't know if anyone has tried to find out why, but two good reasons can be suggested: tomatoes are relatively easy to grow, and the fruit is useful in many ways—fresh, stewed, stuffed and baked, sauced, grilled and fried, juiced, as an ingredient of pickles, minces, marmalades and relishes, and canned and frozen in various forms for later use. But while tomatoes are quite trouble-free most seasons, a few growing tricks (or cultural practices) can contribute significantly to overall success.

Starting your own plants—plant seed indoors around six weeks before the date you hope to set plants out in the field. Tomatoes used to be started much earlier, but research indicates that larger plants suffer much more in transplant, and then recover slowly or not at all. The gardener may harvest a few early fruit of average quality only, but later productivity will be poor.

Gardeners who start tomatoes from seed run the risk of seeing the plants damp off. This soil-borne fungus disease attacks seedlings at the stem where it emerges from the soil. The lowest part of the stem darkens, softens, quickly shrinks, and then the seedling falls over and dies. Preventive measures include: keep the soil warm and don't overwater; treat the seed with Thiram (Arasan); sterilize the soil; or coat the soil surface, after the seeds are planted, with a thin layer of finely milled sphagnum moss.

Pricking out and transplanting—small seedlings are transplanted to larger containers when the second set of (the first "true") leaves unfold. Greenhouses prick out into flats, six or eight plants per flat, usually; but I prefer individual containers. Three-inch peat-pots would work; I use cottage-cheese containers with holes



punched in the bottoms. Old quart berry baskets will serve equally well. The goal in any case is to avoid, to the highest degree possible, damage to the plants' roots.

Transplanting into the garden must take place after danger of frost is well past, unless the gardener intends to use hotcaps or plastic tunnels. Whatever the approach, patience must prevail; even after frost, June's chill nights, rapid temperature changes, and frequent strong winds can place unacceptable stress on tender plants.

I follow these steps in field transplant: water the plants well before setting out; hoe out a hole for each plant and into each hole drop perhaps a tablespoon of superphosphate (0-46-0)—wood ashes will also work to some extent; set the plant in gently, having wrapped the stem with a paper collar to protect against cutworms; and then douse the plant roots with a starter mix of one tablespoon complete fertilizer (16-16-16, for example) per gallon of water. A manure tea can be substituted, augmented with wood ashes. Stemmy plants may be set in at a shallow angle and the portion of stem that is buried will soon develop roots. As a protection against wind, gardeners used to set wooden shingles into the soil beside each plant. Reportedly, large poster-paper cylinders, resembling milk-shake-containers, work well when placed around single plants; the cylinders protect against harsh winds and also contribute to a favorable micro-climate which can sustain plants to about 28°F on still nights.

Further culture—tomatoes will benefit from added fertilizer, particularly on sandy soils in wet years. Pale green or generally yellowing leaves suggest such a need. I usually sprinkle a circle of complete around the plant about the time that the free-growing ones are about to "flop over" and spread.

Growers with limited space will probably wish to prune and in one way or another support the free-growing, or indeterminate, types of tomatoes. Stakes, trellises and wire cylinders are useful. Pruning may result in earlier fruit, but can reduce total productivity. Training up saves space, yields cleaner fruit, and protects against slugs.

Tomatoes are relatively free of insect pests in northern New England. Flea beetles, which are shiny black and the size of pinheads, can riddle leaves in early spring. Extensive damage dehydrates leaves and the holes can provide entry points for disease. Frequent applications of rotenone control flea beetles. Colorado potato beetles will sometimes get started in tomatoes. Pick them off.

As for diseases, choose varieties bred for disease resistance. Extra early varieties all seem prone to early blight. Perhaps the approach is to plant extra earlies for early fruit and then pull the plants up when the maincrop varieties come in.

Harvest and storage—not much needs to be said here. However, tomatoes will ripen in the dark, contrary to popular belief. Just before hard frost, carefully harvest sound green tomatoes, lay them out in trays no more than two deep, and store them someplace fairly cool (50°).

Saving seed—seed of hybrids will not come true; however, seed of standard varieties is easily saved. I wait until a ripe fruit is getting soft, squirt the seed into a sieve, wash to remove as much pulp as possible, then spread the seed on newspaper. After two weeks or so the seed can be scraped off, put in envelopes, labelled, and stored. I keep seed in a tightly closed coffee can in the freezer.



NIGHT LETTER

by William C. Brooks



Will started awake at the sound of Ben's cough. It wasn't often that he could sleep a full eight hours without being awakened by his son, whose window he inevitably forgot to open before the night cough began. Will slid carefully from under the covers and tottered for a moment before standing upright between the bureau and the bed. Ben coughed again; Will shuffled slowly into the boy's room at the end of the hall. The window was shuttered on the inside for decoration; the shade between the shutters and the window was drawn, too. Not a bit of cool, moist air was coming in. Will pushed the window open, adjusting the shade and shutters to allow air to flow, but not directly at the sleeping boy. Ben's cough stopped almost instantly as the cooler air reached his end of the captain's bed. Moving in his sleep, the boy hugged his father who bent over him. And then he slept deeply again.

As he often was after Ben's nocturnal coughing spell, Will was now fully awake, knowing he would be unable to sleep again for several more hours. The time was a quiet one, good for writing letters or reading without interruption. Tonight, Will decided, he would write the long overdue letter to his aunt and uncle to thank them for the china plate commemorating the old high school. Will had received it for Christmas several months before. He sat at the worn mahogany desk, slowly filled his fountain pen and began to write:

Dear Folks,

The Christmas rush is past, and this year is already beginning to look somewhat like the last—the shapes of the days are remarkably the same. Let's hope that the days bring all of us joy and more time to visit with each other.

How much fun it was to see the "old school" on the commemorative plate! I guess just about everyone has a pet story about the old building. Mine, of course, has to be that of the "Great Clean-Up Day: moving antiques of education and assorted teaching paraphernalia, including sacks of lamp-black."

Maybe you remember the day old Si Garnett decided the students would have a day off to clean up the building. As he originally saw that event in his mind's eye, I'll bet it was confined to the four, awfully shabby rooms we used for the Academy. But, about 11:30 a.m., the principals in this little drama were drawn towards the squatty attic, known to be off limits, but we thought, "It really wouldn't touch him off, would it, today, since we're all cleaning up anyway?" And we went upstairs.

I really think that attic hadn't been entered for about 100 years, allowing a slight overestimate. Surely half the items lying around up there had been hauled in at the school's opening and re-stored—most of it simply hadn't seen daylight for many, many decades. It fascinated us, going back so suddenly into our pasts and the pasts of our people. We leafed through old, musty textbooks and saw the names of parents, aunts and uncles, even grandparents, scrawled on tattered fly leaves. We were rather subdued and reverential, maybe how we'd have been entering a crypt. (Or maybe I imagined that lull in our exuberance to rationalize what came later. No, I believe there really was a genuine lapse in our carrying on; anyway, I don't need to rationalize now, so there must have been a lull.)

Someone thrust a hand and arm into a box half-hidden under a pine table and brought forth a weird, wooden box which looked like a minuscule milking machine; it had a small crank on one side. It was the size of a chalk box, and its corner joints were dovetailed. A partially torn label told us it was "Dr. Whitney's Homeopathic Medicine Generator." The ancient label went on to list in fine print almost all the ailments known then, and about three-quarters of those known now, to medical science. And it claimed that, by a simple twirling of the crank while the patient grasped two tin wands hooked up to the box by bell wire, the patient would be cured of his malady. Here we had it! A practical application of the dis-

coveries of Franklin, Volta, Henry and Joule. Science at work first hand, if you'll pardon the pun.

Several brave upperclassmen volunteered the services of a freshman, and the experiment was on. As I remember it, others may know more exactly, a small pulley gave a mite of trouble because it was bent and caused the frayed string running to the generator to fall off. "We'll fix that" and "Give her here, but don't pull off the wires, fool!" and "What in hell would you know, you can't even read the label." Back on the table, ready to run. "Hold those tin pieces! Tight! Let her go!" My God, that kid leaped off the floor, simultaneously and with incredible speed, detaching himself from the "tin wands"!

I think our reverential mood had started to crack then, although like a person about to be hit from behind, we were too close to see it. Several more subjects were brought up, until then kept in the dark as to the lethal effects of our experiments; they all leaped, but none made the lasting impression on us the first naive lad had done.

While the science parade was on, the group was more or less unified. "Hey, look here; keep your eyes on this!" "Boy, will he be surprised!" "Look at him leap!" But, after the intense, initial interest in science caused by novelty, people began to stray and poke and push and "You lay off!" "Damn you!" and "I'll get you for that, you jerk!"

Until now I've tried not to put any names down except Si O. Garnett's (S.O.G. Funny, how I always laughed at those initials.) But now I've got to say one or two names, and I hope my old friends won't take umbrage if time causes some memory failures. I also hate to say it, given that he's your own nephew, but it seems to me it was Lawrence Barstow whose hand came to rest on a sack of pure carbon black, once used as makeup in school plays or employed in science class demonstrations of the effects of conduction.

I could say Lawrence fell or was pushed, or, urged on a little too far, was beside himself, but it's not true. I

think he, being lucky enough to be able to land the first blow, recognized his advantage, calculated the risks, threw caution to the wind and the bag of carbon black as well, and all Hell broke loose! The air was thick in a minute and in two, the lot of us looked like seasoned miners after shift. Things in general had gotten to a fever pitch. Carbon black flew; books tagged along; table went over; a few punches landed. No one could see, and the place sounded like Bedlam.

Just as there was a collective, unspoken decision to go up to the attic in the first place, there was, likewise, a collective, unconscious decision to go down. I was in the vanguard now, having hung back shyly upstairs. As I beat my hasty, soot-laden retreat, up the hallway came Si Garnett. Quick as sin, he knew what had happened above. Never breaking stride, that little Roman candle exploded, seized me by belt and neck hair and hooked me on the nearest coat hook, one of dozens lining the wall. I was about 104 pounds then; I'd break the hook now. Gaining momentum, Si shot up the attic stairs and fired another salvo, scattering bodies Hell, West and crooked. Si was wild, and his anger, not to mention the soot-heavy air, may have been enough to slightly impair his vision and retard his reflexes. And it was then that Jake Stiles, nearly cornered but marching as always to a different drummer, saw his chance to escape. He hooked his arm over the top round of the broken belfry ladder, pulled himself through the trap-doorway and slammed the door shut on Si and the town's chance for a peaceful afternoon.

You may recall this next part even if the entree is new because the bell was widely heard. With every oath and imprecation Si hurled up at the trapdoor, Jake was steadily gaining an appreciation of his worsening position. Later, he told us that he sat on the door; twenty men would have found it a chore to raise that trapdoor with Jake on it. Sensing where Jake was sitting, Si didn't try a frontal assault, except for the verbal offerings he was sending up. I guess Jake just got tired of the harangue and grabbed the bell clapper and banged it onto the old bell. (The rope had been taken down long before.) That seemed soothing to Jake, and each time Si started to yell, Jake whapped the bell a stout blow.

It was a wild scene in the study hall below, about 100 people trying to collect themselves and not look implicated at all.

Everyone was about to die each time that bell tolled. Erratic! My God, he missed every natural rhythm known to man. Intermittent, irregular encouragement to Jake from Si... and we all got the same encouragement for our laughter.

I'm sure that new school will be a marvel; I think I know that the old one had to come down, but I don't have to like it because there was some of whatever I am in that school. And there was a Hell of a lot of other good peoples' selves in there, too. And somehow I don't believe they'll laugh as much, ever, in that new school as we did inside that old school with its oil-soaked, meandering floor boards.

We love you and missed a good chat at Christmas, but maybe this little recollection will serve to pass a few humorous moments.

Love,
Will

Chuckling to himself, Will carefully folded the pages of the letter and sealed them in an envelope upon which he wrote his relatives' address in bold letters. A glance at the mantle clock told him it was now four in the morning. Suddenly, he felt the tiredness which the act of writing had pushed from his consciousness. Slowly, he pushed back the desk chair he was seated in, rising as he did so. He quietly made his way once more to his son's room and found the boy sleeping soundly with his arms tucked under his body, for Ben, always a sign of deep sleep.

With his night sojourn completed, Will finally headed wearily back to his room and crawled heavily into bed. He hoped to catch a few more hours of sleep before the irrepressible Ben was up for the morning, clamoring for his father's undivided attention. As he relaxed gently into sleep, his last thoughts were not on his son, however, but on a solitary boy perched on a wooden trapdoor high in an old school belfry. His last image was of the boy banging out his own impressive but unmistakable message of protest for all to hear.

Dr. William Brooks is a counselling psychologist at Nova Scotia Teachers College, Truro, Nova Scotia. He calls Cornish, Maine "home."

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A long time ago, one hundred and forty years, to be exact, there lived in the town of Monsapog, among the lakes of Maine, a man and his daughter. They were scrawny people—skinny as spindles. Some said it was because they didn't hard-till the field and work the harvest; others said that they grew that way because of their tight hearts. With a tight heart nothing is right: the well goes sour, the bread doesn't rise, and the slack of the day is filled with evil thoughts—the most evil of which is concerned with expecting something for nothing. That was bony Ard and his scrawny daughter, Asenath.

On top of all that free-expecting, they got a surprise in the form of Joseph. Joseph came over the hill one day and announced his mother had given him to Ard, her brother, on her death bed.

Ard was surprised but, in some way, pleased to see the boy. This young fella ought to be able to work the land without so much as a sweat-palm from me, he thought, I'll let him stay.

Asenath was pleased because her cousin Joseph had come from Boston, the land of fine jeweled ladies and beaver-hatted gentlemen.

Joseph had no intent to settle in forever. After his mother's death he had, in fact, run to Boston to join the Navy. You could do it then if you'd reached the sturdy age of twelve. Luck had caught up with him there, though, in the form of a sickly cough and fevered eyes, so he'd minded his ma's wish and headed for Maine. He'd stay till he found a cure and then set out again on the wild seas.

That first evening, Joseph sat by the fire after a meal of watery gruel and johnnycake. He began to tease a kitten with a piece of twine he had pulled from his pocket. Suddenly Asenath dashed across the room and gave the striped cat a kick that sent it hard against the wall. It yowled and then began licking its wounds.

"What you do that for?" asked Joseph, his blue eyes flashing with anger.

"Dad-raggled cat's in the way!" spat Asenath. She stood in front of him holding up a piece of cloth that had fallen from Joseph's pocket. "What's this?" she demanded.

"It's satin," he said. "All the fine ladies in Boston wear it even when

they're kneading dough." Joseph picked up the cat and stroked its ruffled fur.

With one hand Asenath felt the roughness of her homespun dress over her bony hip. Then she smoothed the satin cloth with her little finger as if anything more might spoil it. "And velvet? You got any velvet?" she burst out.

"Of course!" Joseph pulled a piece of rumpled stuff from his sleeve. "A queen gave it to me."

"Naw! It wouldn't be a queen. A fine lady, no doubt!" came Ard's gruff voice as he roused himself from a snooze.

"Some day I'm going to wear all this stuff," Asenath declared, screwing up her face until the tip of her nose went pink.

Joseph started to tuck the bits of cloth back in his blouse.

Ard scowled at him. "Give them to As and any more you have," he said.

Joseph looked at him in surprise. "It's all I've got, sir."

"So now they are Asenath's. You're nothing but help and I ain't going to have help own anything I ain't got," said Ard with finality as he slumped down on the settle to snooze again.

That was when Joseph decided these were sour people. He guessed Ma hadn't known how sour. But he remembered her saying that work and a jovial eye tend to the evil of sourness. If he was going to eat he would have to work the earth. So, day after day, Joseph raked the stones, spread the manure, planted the seeds—without so much as a thankyou from bony Ard and his scrawny daughter, Asenath. He worked, but his jovial eye was ready.

One morning Joseph had gotten up at light, his straw mattress having made him prickly-itchy. He was sitting on the broken stoop watching the sun rise when Asenath came to the well with her wooden bucket. She let it plunge down so fast it thudded on the stone sides and the rope went spinning off the wheel and into the well. There was a hollow splash as the bucket hit the water.

"What you do that for?" called

THE TREASURE

Fiction by

Joseph. I ain't going to climb down there and mend no broken rope!"

Asenath twitched her shoulders. "You ought to be of some use!"

Joseph winced inside but he wasn't no way going to let As know, so he laughed. The laughing set off a fit of coughing.

"And see you don't spread any of those death germs around, neither!" Asenath was gone at that, her skinny rump last in the shed door.

Joseph fastened a well-hook he'd seen in the barn to a willow branch and managed to snare the bucket, rope and all. "Here's your water, As," he called. "I got me some work to do."

As came back, her bare feet stomping dust clouds around her ankles. To Joseph's surprise, she plunked herself down on a bit of straw at his feet. "Tell me about Boston," she demanded. "Is the streets made of gold?"

Now, as you know, Joseph wasn't beyond a joke or two. He looked Asenath over thoughtfully. How he hated bony elbows! How he detested scraggly hair! "Yes," he answered. "And they wear diamonds in their hair."

"How's that?" Asenath hugged herself in delight.

"Well they got curls instead of straw!"

Not understanding, Asenath looked down at the straw at her feet. "What do they talk about?"

Joseph didn't rightly know what the fancy people talked about. He'd only had to do with sailors and rough stuff. "Captain Kidd and his treasure," he said.

"A goat?"

"No, silly! He was a pirate and he hid his treasure everywhere but most especially on the shores of Maine."

"You mean here on Cobbosseeconteecook?" Asenath's eyes seemed to bulge out.

Joseph managed to keep from smiling. He nodded his head thoughtfully. "Well, it took a deal of sailing to get that brig of his up all those little brooks from the ocean!"

Asenath had never seen the ocean.

OF MONSAPOG

Edith Garner

She had no idea it might be bigger than her lake. "And no one knows where the treasure is hid?" she asked.

"True! True! It's there for the taking." Joseph stood up and picked up the wooden hay fork that lay nearby. "Come on," he said as he started for the field. "We got to get us some new straw for them mattresses. I ain't going to sleep another night on that old stuff! New straw'll give you a bright dream."

That night, Asenath tossed and turned on her mat, new straw and all. Then she did begin to dream. In her dream she saw Captain Kidd and a gang of sailors. They were dressed fit to dance, in satin and lace and velvet. They were digging deep into the ground and she knew just where. It was on the shore of Cobbosseecontecook. They dug deep and deeper and then they grunted softly as they placed a heavy trunk in the hole. They covered it all with an enormous flat rock and shoveled it over with mountains of dirt.

As, who was dreaming so hard of Captain Kidd and his treasure, did not recognize Joseph's whispering. It seemed to be the straw pillow under her head that sang to her.

*"Dream you, dream you
Three nights ensuing
Then what you brew
comes
True, true, true."*

When Asenath awoke she could think only of jewels and gold. Surely they would be hers. But something about the dream troubled her.

It was a soggy day. Ard had limped down to the tavern to while away his time with his cronies. Joseph was asleep on the settle. He was coughing less and sleeping more these days.

Asenath, fuddlebrained with jewels and gold, forgot to latch the gate and the mangy mare got out. "Joseph! Joseph!" she shrieked. "Get Beulah! She's gone and lifted the latch."

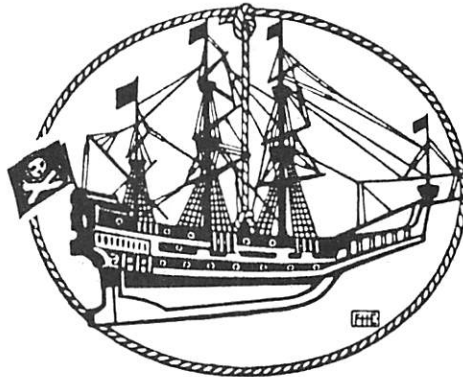
Joseph opened one eye. "She's hunting treasure," he said. "We'll let her be." He snapped the eye shut.

Asenath began to tremble. How did he know about treasure? It must be a sign I should ask him about what troubles me, she thought.

She watched him for awhile, his pink nostrils going in and out as he breathed. Then she shook him by the right shoulder. "Joseph! Listen to me! Joseph, do you know big words?" Asenath leaned over him hoping the eye would open and not snap shut again.

"You mean like the bad ones?" and he named a few.

Asenath put her hands over her ears and jumped up and down. "No! NO! NO! I know all those words, but I gots to find out what a funny one means."



"What for?" asked Joseph.

"Never mind what for. It's private."

"Well, what's the word?"

Asenath bent down and hissed the word so loud it sprinkled his ear. "Ensuing," she said.

"Oh, that!" said Joseph. "That's like when you use a judge."

Asenath thought about that for awhile. Joseph pretended to sleep again.

Four more turns around the room and Asenath shook Joseph once more. "No it ain't!" she said. "It's something to do with dreams. It's a jingle and it goes:

*'Dream you, dream you
Three nights ensuing
Then what you brew
comes
True, true, true.'*

"Oh, that's easy," said Joseph. "Ma told me about that. It just means if

you dream the same dream three nights running it will come true."

"How can you dream and run?"

Well, it took a deal of explaining but finally Asenath got the idea and the rest of her day was spent trying to figure out a way to dream that dream for two more nights.

She didn't need to worry. Her skinny mind could only set itself on one idea and that was heaps of treasure. So, of course, there was the same dream the second night and the third night, also. She awoke that morning and began to make plans.

Joseph set about the chores with a secret grin on his face that day. He followed her every move. He could tell As must have dreamed the right dreams. At one point she went to the barn and got a wooden spade. She put it handy by the trunk of a slippery elm. Not much else happened until nightfall. Ard had returned from the tavern and was snoring before the fire with too much grog. Joseph watched the girl creep out the door and then he crept after her into the night.

It was a mile to the spot. Lucky he could follow her for he had never been this way before. The moon had come out and the trees whooshed in the wind. He kept about fifty paces behind her. She headed for the lake. Once at the right spot, she paced things out from the nearest pine to a huge boulder that lay by the shore. Then she began to dig.

Suffice it to say, one night's digging scarcely scraped off the top. But Asenath kept going back. Joseph stayed home most nights and just checked on the progress or lack of it every night or so. He seemed mightily pleased.

Asenath got skinnier and skinnier with all that exercise. Even Ard began to notice how scrawny his daughter was getting to be. "What's the matter with you, As? Ain't got a mite of bubble under that skin. What you been doing?"

It was right at that moment that Asenath decided she would share the jewels with Ard. After all he was her father and she was mighty tired of digging all by herself. She crept up close and whispered her secret in his ear so Joseph could not hear, which only made Joseph smile the more.

"Three nights in a row, you say, girl?" Ard picked a pine splinter out of



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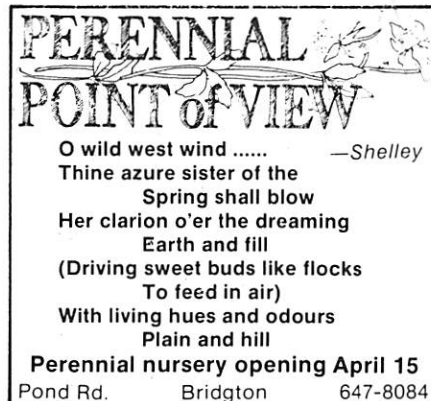
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a log ready for burning and began to scratch his head. The glitter of gold and diamonds was already shining in his mind's eye. He thought about how he had always worked too hard and that he deserved to spend his waning days admiring rubies and diamonds and ordering folks around.

The two of them went digging that night. Joseph watched with twice as much enjoyment as before. He was feeling stronger every day now. Fall had come and the leaves were turning to gold and red with the green of the pines between. Joseph's cheeks were turning rosy too, and his eyes had lost their glassy look.

Needless to say, Ard got thinner and persnickitier, but he kept on digging night after night. He'd never worked so hard in his life, but the thoughts of days of ease kept him going.

One night when there had been a special lot of stones turned and Asenath's spade had splintered off in her hands, Ard sank down on the settle before the fire. "You know, As, it ain't fair of us to keep all this treasure to ourselves. We'd best tell our friends about it. Eleven digging surely would get to the bottom."

Joseph was up to his old trick of pretending to be asleep so they didn't think he could hear. Of course he did.

The next day Ard gathered some special friends in the tavern and told them all the secret news of Asenath's dream.

You may be sure Joseph didn't sleep that night. He hid himself down to watch eleven grown men and a skinny girl toiling for Captain Kidd's lost treasure on the shore of a shallow pond.

This went on for many nights and the hole was getting deeper and deeper but still there was no sound of shovel striking anything sizeable.

Then it happened. Joseph woke up that day with a light feeling in himself. It's time, he thought. He plumped his straw mattress for the last time and prepared himself a secret snack. Today he would be journeying no matter what.

That evening he gave Ard and Asenath and all their helpers, time to get to the dig. Then he followed. He was surprised to hear whispering about him as he lay in the brush. The deep dark secret was being kept by all the friends of the friends and everyone was awaiting his share. Suddenly several shovels at once struck some-

thing hard. A great shout went up. "It's here! It's here!" and all the secret people, with a cracking of branches, stretched as far out as they could to peek in the pit. The men heaved and heaved at that solid flat rock and finally it began to move. There was a great scrambling to get near the hole. Up out of the earth came a thunderous roaring and a cold blast of water burst about and covered those hovering there. Such a scrambling there was to run to safety! Down the road they stomped, helter skelter, as fast as fright could carry them, the roaring still sounding in the night air.

As for Joseph, he lay in his hide-away and hugged himself with glee. When he was sure the treasure-seekers were far down the road, he went to the hole to see what the noise had been about. Below him the dislodged boulder had tumbled into an underground rushing stream and settled so that it sprayed the cold water above.

Feeling as sound as a ruby, Joseph left that night. People heard, years later, that after he'd sailed the square-riggers many times about the world, he had taken up his abode in Boston-town and could be seen well hatted and gloved and escorting a fine lady. Some wondered where he got all that finery.

It's also said that no one dared go back to that spot on the shores of Cobboosecontecook for fear the dogs of Captain Kidd would attack once more. The hole, full deep and square, big enough to set a house in and cover it up, is still there to remind all sour folk of the folly of free-expecting and that a tight heart needs a jovial eye to endure the rigors of living.

Edith Garner writes from her home in Monmouth: "This story, 'The Treasure of Monsapog,' is based on a Monmouth legend which Mr. Arthur Cochran included in his turn-of-the-century history of Monmouth and Wales. He reports there was belief that Captain Kidd adventured up the Kennebec through the Cobboosee Stream to Cobboosecontee. It brought him to the shore of Monmouth. Here he buried his treasure, covered it with an enormous rock, and left. The legend influenced a group of Monmouth citizens to try to find the treasure. They dug and dug but to no avail. From Mr. Cochran's account we learn the pit 'big enough to hold a house' remains to this day (then about 1900)."

... James B. Hamlin

As World War II approached, strategic metals became scarce, and Eichner was forced to work alone. Jim took over at the League and headed the metalworking department for ten years.

It was while he was working on a pewter tea cannister that Jim heard the news of the attack on Pearl Harbor. Immediately, he scratched the story on the inside of its lid, where it can be seen with the aid of a dental mirror. The cannister sits on the shelf of his display room, its simple, sedate form belying its message, as well as its contents—gunpowder tea!

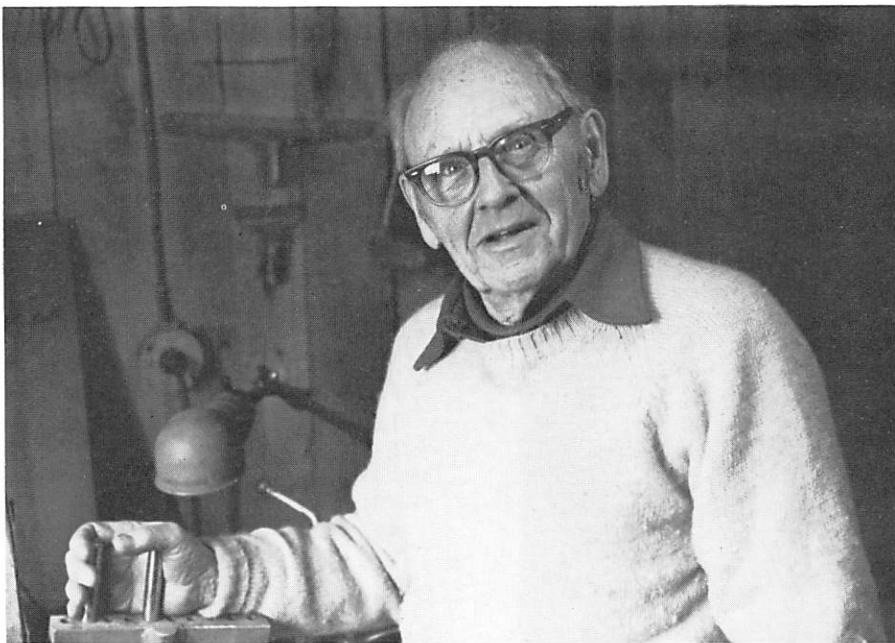
During the 1939 World's Fair, Jim exhibited three amazing examples of his superb craftsmanship: A replica of a horseshoe crab, done in silver, which took over 200 hours to produce, and contains every moveable part; a dragonfly, and a praying mantis. Jim has an intense appreciation of the natural world, which never fails to excite or inspire him. After his return to Maine years later, he created a silver replica of the fragile May fly.

During the New York years, Jim also exhibited in the Smithsonian traveling exhibition of 1939, and in a show on Staten Island. His favorite piece is a sundial, composed of brass, copper, silver and aluminum, which took him a year to complete due to the difficulty in calculating the days.

In 1953, Jim made the move back to North Bridgton, and found himself listed in the 1959-60 **Who's Who in American Art**. When I asked him about the difficulty of opening a small shop in a small town, he replied with his usual enthusiasm, "My first customer was Mrs. Lily Marr. She ordered a copper bracelet for her arthritis, and I was in business."

When he placed an ad in the Bridgton News for his silver pickle fork, he sold one and was satisfied with himself. Perseverance, dedication, and pure love of his work have made him known and respected by friends and collectors alike.

Thirty-eight students have spent tedious hours in his shop, designing sawing, soldering, filing and polishing under his tough but encouraging tutelage. Shortcuts don't exist there, and the engineer in him will have a student gauging sheet and wire with a micrometer. A tiny scratch or a shadow of firescale (discoloration caused by high heat), means stoning



Bill Haynes Photo

and polishing until the piece is too hot to handle, but gleams to perfection.

Jim teaches patience by tempering tension and possible frustration with a marvelous sense of humor, a vast collection of Yankee tales, and tidbits of local history which he has acquired through simple longevity. A memory like an elephant comes in handy, too.

Many folks might not realize that they have seen Jim's work in use or on display. St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Bridgton houses his enameled processional crucifix; the Congregational Church in Norway commissioned a brass bowl; and the Central Maine Vocational and Technical Institute in Auburn displays his sculpture of a young hand clasping an elderly hand, as a symbol of the nursing profession.

Working with metal has provided Jim with a subtle form of therapy and a continuous focus throughout his life. When he raises a bowl from a flat sheet, he anneals it, places it at just the right angle on a polished steel stake, and begins rhythmically tapping with his raising hammer, repeating an act that masters of this craft have performed for centuries. Possessing a timeless beauty, the finished piece is testimony to the skill Jim Hamlin has acquired during his richly varied life.

Cynthia Baker is gardener, writer, wife and mother in Bolster's Mills, Maine.

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... Hamlin Family

the training from reading and discussion received in this way was of more value than the common school. A few novels were read, but their reading was mainly historical and biographical.

They had comparatively few books, but they knew them thoroughly, the Bible among the rest. They were much interested, too, in missionary news and all the boys and girls tried to raise a penny a week for this cause. (In those days a bushel of potatoes sold for 10¢.)

There were four great holidays in the year: Thanksgiving, Fourth of July, Election Day, and the Annual Muster Day, when the regiment turned out. Summer clothes were of home-made linen cloth, which never wore out.

They cultivated four or five acres each year, harvesting about 200 bu. of potatoes, 20 bu. wheat, 30 bu. shelled corn, 12 or 15 of rye, 20 of oats, besides peas, beans, and buckwheat for table use. Butter, cheese, a fatted hog, oats, and beans were sold in Portland for money. The farm yielded an abundance of vegetables and quantities of apples grew in the orchard. With these on hand, they felt well prepared for winter.

At sixteen, the question as to Cyrus' future came up. He wanted to be a farmer but Dr. Gage said *no*, he was not strong enough; it would kill him. So it was decided that he should go to Portland and stay with his sister Rebecca who was happily married to Charles Farley, a silversmith and jeweler, in whose store he would learn the business. On a bitter winter day, the two boys, in company with neighbors, made the journey of forty miles with the old mare (Jan. 6, 1827). Thus Cyrus' life as a mechanic in the city began.

Hannibal later pursued his education largely by himself. He studied mathematics and became a skillful surveyor. He was very conscientious and independent. He dared to do right.

For a month or two, Cyrus was miserable at his new work. He was timid and bashful, but Mr. Farley encouraged him to become acquainted with every part of the trade and, when he finished his apprenticeship at twenty-one, to go into business with him.

At length Cyrus became much interested in religious services and joined Dr. Edward Payson's church.

After he had been in Portland two years, a deacon finally persuaded him that it was his duty to study for the ministry. The church voted him \$1000 for his education, and with much regret at leaving Portland and his work, which he had learned to like, he went to Bridgton Academy to prepare for college, being now 18 years and 4 months old. It was only after the most prayerful searching of his heart that he took the course; but, having been once done, it was never regretted.

In 1830, the first Total Abstinence Society of Waterford was formed. At Bridgton Academy, Cyrus was at length finishing his course. It had given him considerable opportunity to be at home again.

In the fall of 1830, he entered Bowdoin College, where he stood out as an exceptional student in many ways, being studious, persistent, likeable, deeply religious, and determined to accomplish whatever he undertook. While there, he constructed (after three months of hard labor and many discouragements) the first steam engine ever made in Maine. This was done for his professor to show to the class the working of such an engine. It has been preserved among the relics of the institution. Cyrus graduated practically at the head of his class in 1834.

The following fall, he entered Bangor Theological Seminary, having made up his mind to be a foreign missionary. His mother had hoped to keep her youngest near her in her old age, but she gave him up without a struggle. In the seminary, as at Bowdoin, he made several very fine friendships which he kept active throughout his life.

In October, 1836, he sent to the missionary board a statement of his readiness to enter the missionary field, expressing a preference for China, as Africa, his first choice, was out of the question. Before his graduation in the spring of 1837, he had received an appointment to go to Constantinople for educational work. This suited him exactly, for the climate was unsurpassed, and it was on the border of civilization.

He resolved to see if Henrietta Jackson, a friend who had a predisposition to pulmonary disease, would go with him to share his life and work. She agreed so to do. There was considerable delay before he was able to get a call to start for Turkey; consequently, the marriage was delayed

and he spent the time supplying the pulpit in various churches—chief of which was seven months in the Payson church in Portland. After a delay of a year and six months, the call came very suddenly. He was married Sept. 3, 1838, and would have sailed for Smyrna Sept. 12, but the voyage was delayed again until December.

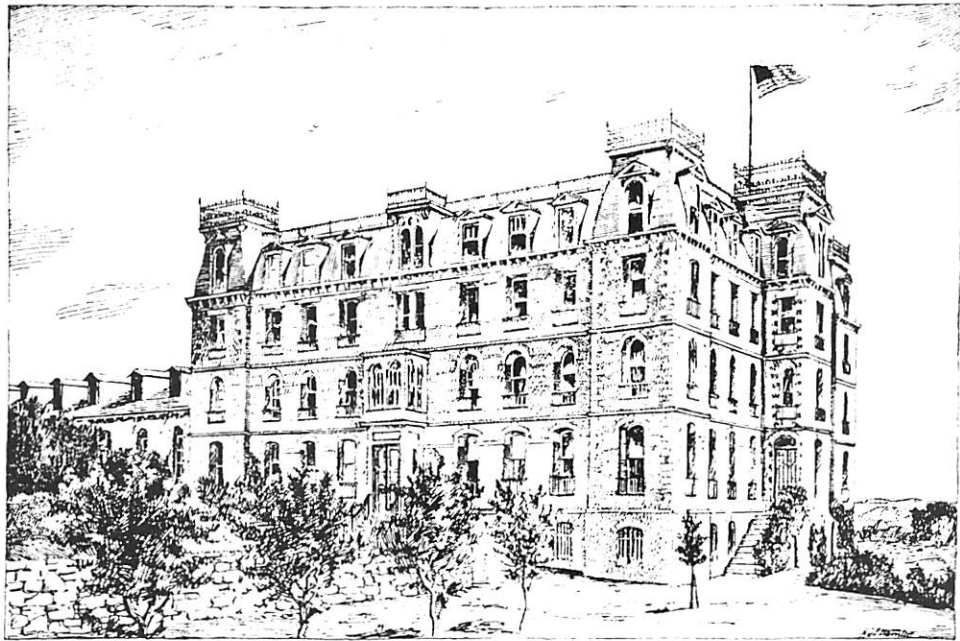
It was bitter cold and his wife was very seasick all the way. They arrived at Smyrna Jan. 17, 1839. Upon landing at Constantinople, he found that his task would be a difficult one, for threats and plots of persecution were rife. The Armenian teacher whom he had engaged to teach him the language was soon obliged to desert him because of pressure from Turkish officials, and things looked none too good.

With dogged persistency and courage, he kept at his work. Russia was determined that Protestantism would not gain a foothold in Turkey and tried in every possible way to interfere with the plans of the missionaries.

About June, 1839, the Hamlins began housekeeping and baby Henrietta was born December 5th of that year. She was followed in the course of time by Carrie, Abbie, Clara, and Alfred.

After a long search, a house was found in Bebek. The rooms were immense in size and height. On Nov. 4, 1840, Mr. Hamlin moved into it and started, in a very small way, the Bebek Seminary, of which he was the head and chief teacher for 29 years. With only two pupils at first—American boys—he advanced to twelve the first year. Once or twice the school was closed for a time because of Turkish opposition, but Cyrus Hamlin was soon on the job again. In a letter to his brother Hannibal some years later, he said: "As to what I am doing, I will say briefly, I am talking, that is *preaching*, nearly all the time. I have a great deal of outside work to do. I have many visitors who come for religious inquiry or discussion."

In November of 1843, the seminary was moved to a much larger house. Dr. G. W. Wood became his assistant teacher and ably performed his tasks for seven years. Some years later, the seminary was moved to Marsovan and the abandoned house, newly repaired and repainted, became the cradle of Robert College (1863-1871). In it there was space for fifty-two student boarders.



*Roberts College, Istanbul
founded by Dr. Cyrus Hamlin*

The aim was to make it an American College, teaching the regular college subjects. No such school then existed in Turkey. An able and accomplished professor of the Armenian language and literature was always employed. The students were mostly from those families who had adopted evangelical principles to the great injury of their worldly affairs. Some were young men who had themselves renounced the follies and idolatries of their church and were cast out by their own relatives.

Besides teaching, lecturing and preaching, Dr. Hamlin now did considerable writing. The Jesuits for a long time had been publishing a series of tracts against the Protestant religion, to which, after a time, Dr. Hamlin replied, in a book called, "Papists and Protestants." This book was read extensively, but a prominent Armenian banker said that it "saved the nation from Rome." Various other tracts on Christian subjects were written by Dr. Hamlin at this time. Much time was also given to the translation of textbooks for Armenian schools.

Many trying experiences were constantly coming to Dr. Hamlin through the hostilities of the Turkish government and the Catholic orders to the Protestant school. Every advance was contested and had to be overcome with sagacity and persistency.

In May, 1860, Dr. Hamlin resigned his connection with the missionary board to put his endeavors to the founding of Robert College at Constantinople—so-called for Mr. Christopher R. Robert of New York, who was its chief instigator, furnishing many thousand dollars in funds, as well as determination and perseverance in the face of great difficulties.

Leaving his five children at home, Dr. Hamlin and his wife set out for America to raise \$100,000 with which to begin the enterprise. He arrived in America just before the election of Lincoln and Hamlin (his cousin Hannibal), and so intense was the excitement that little could be done until the election was over.

The election over, the excitement increased instead of subsided, so he occupied himself in giving lectures on Turkey. On April 12, 1861, the Civil War began. After that, the country was in so much uncertainty that little fundraising was possible. He had already collected some thousands of dollars when Mr. Roberts put \$30,000 worth of railroad bonds in the hands of trustees and told him to go back and erect a building as far as the money would go.

Various obstacles were thrown in his way, however, by Turks who objected to the new college; with the result that it was finally begun in the big seminary building previously

NEW ENGLAND ANCESTORS by Lauralee Clayton

CLIMBING YOUR FAMILY TREE

Dubbing himself in jest a living fossil, James B. Vickery of the Bangor Historical Society explains that as a child he once hugged a lady born in 1823 (his great-aunt). Her sister-in-law (his grandmother) could remember when she was five years old going to the 100th birthday celebration of her great-grandmother, Hannah Chase, an early settler of Unity, Maine. Vickery, on leave from his director's desk at BHS, spoke at a fall meeting of the Maine Genealogical Society over at University of Maine in Farmington. "I had another aunt born in 1847 and another one born in 1850," Vickery added in a separate telephone interview just before the New Year.

"I believe genealogy isn't just for the sake of finding your ancestry, but to illuminate history. You learn how it was, in a human element, closer to people," he said. "The past isn't so far back that sometimes we're able to get memories of our families and put them down before it's too late," Vickery told genealogists at Farmington. As a youngster, he said, he had access to all the family attics, spending time under the eaves exploring memorabilia when he was 13 or 14 years old. One set of photographs he reviewed included "a horrible collection" revolving around a murder victim years ago in Thorndike.

The study of genealogy, he believes, brings our ancestors to life, giving us a more dimensional view. It humanizes history and makes it comprehensible, he says. "What trades, what professions, how did they take title to the land?" he asks, charging historians to sift through ledgers to seek what kinds of crops their ancestors raised, what kinds of medical treatment they received—information useful to us in compiling our own medical histories. "Use the imagination to probe sources," he advises. "We need to know where we have been to get to where we are going."

Vickery is the editor of *An Illustrated History of Bangor, Maine (1776-1976)*, a town "formerly the Plantation of Condukeag in ye coun-

try of Arcadia on the River named Penobscot." The parameters of this book extend to a discussion of lumbering terms used liberally in days gone by—terms "unfamiliar to green 'uns," says Vickery, who ticks off swampers, sled-tenders, choppers, toters, wangers, Spanish windlass, sheeting home, hauling taut and chewing up, as examples.

Reporting on the settlement of old Kenduskeag, Vickery shares comments about the infant communities from a pioneer, Elihu Hews ("they had great difficulty in procuring the Necessities of life") and an early surveyor, Park Holland, who pointed out that there was but one framed house in the hamlet by 1794. Even in 1790 after 20 years of settlement, only 169 people lived within the boundaries of the community. Earliest residents included Jonathan Buck (1764) Benjamin Wheeler (1767) in what is now Hampden, John and Josiah Brewer in what is now known as Orrington and Jacob Buswell/Bussell (once called in a dispute with David Wall "an old damned grey-headed bugger of hell," reports Vickery). The historian identifies among the first families of the region names such as Goodwin, Smart, Budge, Howard, Hathorn, Crosby, Webster, Dunning and Treat.

In 1821, writes Vickery, Moses Burley established a stage line between Augusta and Bangor through Vassalboro, Winslow, Clinton, Albion, Unity, Dixmont, Newburgh and Hampden. The horse-drawn vehicle, he says, left Augusta every Wednesday at 4 p.m. arriving in Bangor the next morning at 10. With Spencer Arnold as partner, Burley expanded the operation to provide stage service between Williamsburg and Augusta and eventually over the air-line to Calais, then on to Lincoln and Houlton. Competition from packets, steamers and the

railroad helped hasten the death of the stage lines, but roads were bad and taverns were too, hints the author.

By all means, read **Bangor, An Illustrated History** for clues about your Maine ancestors. Vickery says that hard-bound copies are all sold out but less than a dozen soft-bound editions are still for sale at the Bangor Public Library, if you wish to own a copy.

James Vickery is currently compiling the second volume of the **John E. Godfrey Journals**, due out in print in the spring, published by the Rockland *Courier-Gazette*. Godfrey, a Bangor probate judge, had an imposing Gothic house on the Kenduskeag named Cliff Cottage, a river landmark. Vickery's first volume, available at the Bangor Historical Society and at local bookstores in the Bangor area, covered the years 1863-1870. Volume II deals with the period 1870-1877 and both give background on the life in that region.

Where to Write

Puzzled about how to start on your family history project? Here's what I did, some years ago. I knew the name and death place of my great-grandfather but precious little else. An experienced genealogist advised me to write for his death certificate as it would yield concrete information and an array of particulars to help me in my search. With trepidation I wrote to the Bureau of Vital Statistics in Massachusetts (*Room 103, Ashburton Place, Boston 02108*) enclosing a two-dollar fee. Before too long an official-looking envelope arrived in my mailbox with some of the writing in my great-grandmother's own hand, as she supplied certain facts needed on the certificate. The past came closer and closer as I read not only great-grandfather Andrew's full name and date of death, but his exact age in years, months and days (well over 85 years), his address at time of death, his parents' names and his father's place of birth (Vermont), as well as his own ("Barron, Maine"—which I presumed meant Baring Plantation).



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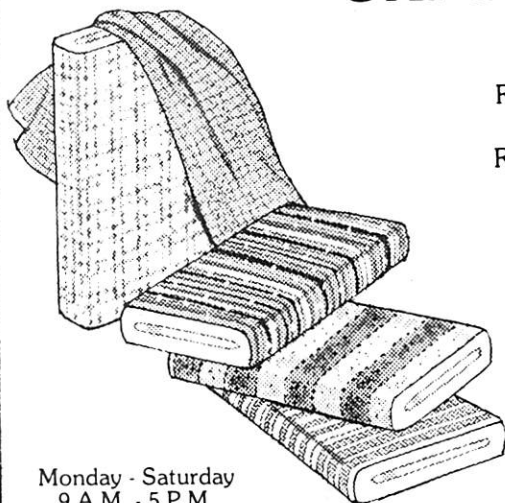
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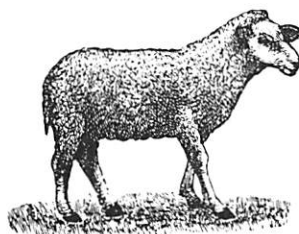


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Also given was his doctor's name, listed with cause of death. Spurred on by success in discovering details I had never known before, I then tracked down great-grandmother's obituary in a vintage newspaper, finding that she had died at an advanced age, having come to this country from New Brunswick, Canada 43 years before. The hunt was on, and so will yours be, as soon as you receive that first death, birth or marriage certificate.

In Maine, write to the *Bureau of Vital Statistics, State Department of Health, State House Complex, Augusta 04333* and send \$2 for one copy of a certificate. In Vermont, write to the *State House, Montpelier, Vermont 05802* and send \$3. In New Hampshire, write the BVS at *61 South Spring Street, Concord 03301* and enclose \$3 for each certificate. Not every birth, marriage or death was properly recorded in every era, so be prepared for some disappointment if none is on file for an elusive forebear. However, try, try again, using your imagination in probing sources.

Other places for finding your ancestors include Bible records, bounty land records, cemetery records, censuses (every 10 years from 1790 to 1910), church records, city directories, county maps, court records, guardianships, historical or genealogical societies, homestead records, immigration records, land grants, legal records, maps, microfilms, passenger lists, pension records, published genealogies, mortuary records, naturalization records, newspapers of former times, state archives, surname indexes, tax lists, and wills, to check off a few.

You might get a leg up your family tree by searching through the thick black notebooks of recorded cemetery inscriptions in the *Surname Index Project of the Maine Old Cemetery Association*. These files are on the shelves at the Maine State Library in Augusta. Another foothold is the book of computerized printouts listing cemetery inscriptions and information on known Revolutionary soldiers buried in Maine. Try Maine Historical Society in Portland, the Maine State Library or Fogler Library at University of Maine, Orono for this resource. Happy hunting!

Mrs. Clayton writes for the Rockland Courier-Gazette.

DAYS OF A FARMER'S WIFE by Lucretia Douglas

Lucretia began writing this column from her home in West Baldwin, Maine, because, she said, "I am afraid that many young people trying to farm for the first time will be terribly disappointed with some of the articles I read in the modern farm magazines ...to my mind they are very impractical and will discourage a lot of young people."

She offers practical tips she has learned on the farm over the past half-century:

It doesn't bother me to be shut in. This is the kind of a day that I spend indulging in my secret hobby—trying out some new recipe or some old favorite that takes extra time to prepare.

Outside it's raining hard, the wind is blowing and already it's starting to turn to sleet. The road is glassy with ice. I'm going to stay inside and make onion rings for supper.

In the morning I peel and slice the biggest onions I have into thin slices and then separate them into rings. I hold the onion under running water to keep my eyes from watering.

I put the rings in a pan of ice water and set in a cool place (not refrigerator). I can't make these unless I find some stale beer (or I open a can the day before to let it get stale). Here is the recipe:

Mix plain sifted flour with enough stale beer to make a dough the consistency of cake batter. Set aside in a warm room for three hours or so, to give the batter a chance to work (the yeast in the beer).

Heat your fat in deep fryer to 375°F. Dry with paper towels and dip onion rings in batter a few at a time. Stir with fork and put in basket that came with fryer. Fry until golden brown, shake out excess fat, spread on paper towels and sprinkle with salt.

Beer batter makes the crunchiest crust—perfect for fish and chicken, too.

I am making a velvet quilt that I hope will be an heirloom. I picked up several velvet skirts, a black evening dress and red jacket at a garage sale last summer. I am fitting odd-shaped pieces cut from the best parts of the garments onto foot square pieces of thin muslin.

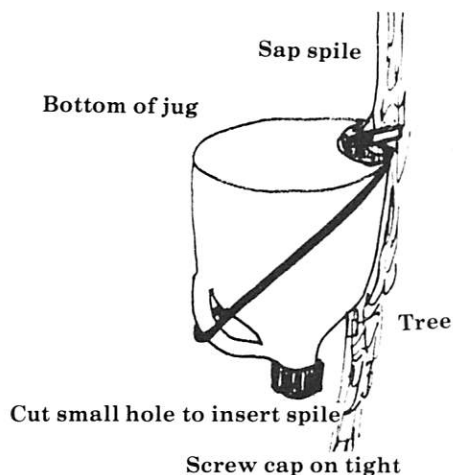
I am trying to blend the different colors so they don't clash, using the black to accent them. Before I join the squares together I shall embroider each square with spider webs, birds or flowers in contrasting colors. Along each seam I feather-stitch adding small flowers with satin stitch, lazy daisy or french knots. If lined with plain wool the quilt needs no batting, but is really more for show than regular use.

My neighbor has been helping me wallpaper my bedroom. She couldn't believe what good paste you can make yourself. I put about two quarts of water on to heat in a heavy four-quart saucepan. In a bowl I whisk a cup of flour and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar with enough cold water to make a thin paste. Then I stir it into the boiling water and cook until it thickens like gravy. Cool before using. Had a hard job scraping off paper put on with this paste nearly twenty years ago.

Save all the plastic milk jugs you can find, either two-quart or gallon size. Clean them well, especially around the cap and handle.

Early in the spring when your freezer starts getting empty start filling milk jugs three-fourths full of water. Cap tightly and fill all the empty space in the freezer with jugs of water. It's best to put in several a day, not fill the whole space at once.

All summer when you need ice for drinks or freezing ice cream you will have plenty of ice. Take a jug with you



when you go into the field to work; it will melt just fast enough to keep you in nice cold water all day.

Two or three jugs in a styrofoam cooler will last two days or more to keep contents cool on a weekend camping trip or a picnic. A strong cardboard box lined with several thicknesses of newspaper will keep the ice from melting and food cool for sometime.

An empty freezer runs far more than a full one, so the more jugs of ice you freeze the less it will cost to operate your freezer.

You can use your extra empty jugs for covering tomato plants if you set them early, or hills of melons or cukes until they start. Cut bottom out of jug and remove cover.

Gallon jugs can also be used for sap pails when tapping maple trees. Put cap on as tightly as possible. Turn jug upside down. Make hole for sap spout just under bottom on side opposite handle.

Jug is hung upside down by heavy cord from jug handle to hook on sap spout. Top (the jug bottom) keeps out rain. To empty simply remove cover and hold pail underneath. It is not necessary to take jug off tree until sap is done running. Replace cap tightly so sap won't leak out. May have to be emptied more often than sap pail but it's free, clean and covered.



NOTES FROM BROOKFIELD FARM by Jack C. Barnes

APRIL'S STREAMS AND FENCES

April is an auspicious month, for its warm winds and gentle showers portend the end of another long hiatus. It is the month when all of nature awakens from an extended sleep. The melting snow is transformed into silvery rivulets that seem to gush from the bowels of the earth; they go tumbling down through trees and gaps in stone walls to swell our brook so much that its banks can no longer contain the flow. Inevitably the turbulent, clear waters dash over low wooded areas, sweeping away last autumn's leaves and naked branches torn loose by the blast of cold winter. The deciduous soil and green moss are exposed along the sylvan banks and normalcy is restored. It is an annual ablution that Nature performs at Brookfield, and the royal ferns and skunk cabbage respond by springing to life at the first touch of the sun's rays.

The snow seems to remain longer at Brookfield, and even now there are a few patches of sullied ice beside the house. Our crocuses, consequently, bloom later than they do on the other side of the hill, but what a welcome sight they are when their tiny golden and purple heads appear along the rail fence that parallels our rustic road. They seem to herald the moment when the process of rebirth begins. The forsythia, daffodils, jonquils, and dainty primroses are quick to respond to the signal and follow the crocuses in rapid succession.

The time has ended when I can linger on a weekend morning over a cup of tea and a new novel that I am reviewing. There are a multitude of tasks that must be performed—seemingly all at once. The poultry pens must be cleaned out and the valuable nitrogen spread with lime and accumulated wood ashes on the gardens and fields. Space must be made for my latest hatching of baby chicks, for they are rapidly outgrowing their large box by the cellar furnace. It is time to harrow and rototill; plant peas, spinach, cauliflower, broccoli, cabbage, kohlrabi, leeks, and onion sets. The list grows progressively longer as the soil becomes warmer.

Each day the haymow becomes smaller and smaller. The sheep seem to be more restless by the day. They are as tired of eating hay as I am of pitching it to them. We both seem to be following the slow, agonizing progress of the green grass in the pastures and praying for the day when I can open the gate and cry, "She-eep, she-eep." The response will be instant, and woe be to my flock of Speckled Sussex or Big Tom (the gobbler that was granted a reprieve last Thanksgiving) if they are caught in the pathway of the thundering herd. More than once our forty-pound gobbler has been knocked asunder when he was unfortunate enough to be standing in front of the shed door at feeding time.

"Oh, Jack, surely they have killed Tom!" my wife Diana exclaimed one day as she watched him disappear in a cloud of wool.

A moment later, however, he miraculously recovered his equilibrium and dignity, and resumed his endless strutting—minus only one tail feather.

In the process of transferring my flock to the pasture, I can almost certainly count on one or two lambs missing the open gate and panicking at being separated from the rest. Then the chase will be on. With any luck my

wife and neighbors will be on hand to witness the grand opening of the pasture gate and help round up the panicky lambs. Then, of course, one must somehow open the gate wide enough to let the lambs in without having the entire flock come pouring out.

Before this long-awaited transition can take place, however, there must be long hours set aside for the mending of fences. "Something there is that doesn't love a wall," wrote Robert Frost in "Mending Wall"—and this applies to wire fences also. The heavy snow and ice cause the wire to sag, staples to pull out, and posts to either lean or break off completely. Time is so precious that I cannot remain inside even when there is a slanted rain. More often than not, or so it seems, the Saturday in early April that I have set aside for mending fences will be rainy or there will be a wet snowfall. It is tempting to say, "Oh, I'll do it another day," and enjoy the warmth and comfort of a wood fire and some reading or writing. But, no, fences and sheep will not wait for the weather to become more benign. Off I must go down the road or up the hill (it depends upon which pasture is the greener) in my aging pickup—loaded with posts, a goodly supply of staples, and the necessary tools. It won't be long until the water is dripping off the rim of my hat and onto my nose. I'll persevere at slogging about until long after the dampness has penetrated to the very marrow of my bones. Eventually, I shall yield to the pangs of hunger and cold and head for the cellar to trade my mud-spattered clothes for dry ones. Then I shall ascend the stairs to the kitchen for a bowl or two of delicious lamb stew, some steaming cranberry muffins which Diana has just removed from the oven, and a pot of scalding hot mint or Japanese green tea. My progress, I then hope, will have been such that I shall not have to venture out into the storm again except to do the evening chores.

Jack Barnes is a teacher at Bonny Eagle High School. His Brookfield farm is at Hiram, Maine.

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